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EDITOR'S LETTER

This summer, at The Beth Chatto Garden in Essex visitors were greeted with a sign that read: 'The Gravel Garden is never irrigated. 50 days without rain', and, as I write, the MET office has confirmed 2018 as the UK's driest summer for 57 years, since records began. Yet the garden still looked beautiful.

The Granary garden in Kent designed by Alex Mitchell has been inspired by Beth's seminal drought garden. Similarly, it is created on the site of a former car park, until recently under concrete. The topography of The Granary takes its cue from the surrounding landscape but it's filled with drought-tolerant plants, including glaucous *Euphorbia myrsinites,* and sedum, stachys and *Rosa rugosa*. As with all gravel gardens, self-seeding plants, such as *Verbascum bombyciferum* and *Verbena bonariensis*, are constantly on the move. A spine of fastigate yew and *Rhus typhina* run the through the planting to anchor it. Alex's approach to her garden is joyful, she is completely absorbed by it.

At Wudston House in Wiltshire the ecologist James Hitchmough has been tasked with making a contemporary meadow by owner and plant enthusiast David Morrison. Experimental in part, perennial, and grown from seed sown four years ago, it is bold both in its planting and philosophy. Designed to be future-proof, the meadow includes the best European, Asian, North American and South African perennial species, including some quirkier choices. Self-sustaining as well as sustainable, it needs very little maintenance and creates an incredible and hazy vision behind the house, rich in colour and detail.

Troy Scott Smith's planting ideas for late summer pots in this issue play with light and colour. Planting in generous layers and careful editing are key to displays that last all summer.

I hope you enjoy the issue,

Lucy Bellamy

LUCY BELLAMY, EDITOR

Two pretty nerines are the focal point for this simple display by Troy Scott Smith, page 48.

ANDREW MONTGOMERY

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RACHEL WARNE

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Find ideas for the next dry summer in Alex Mitchell's Mediterranean-style garden in Kent, page 42.

COVER IMAGE

Wudston House by Claire Takacs

ON THE COVER

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EVENTS AND OFFERS

- Receive *Dreamscapes* by Claire Takacs and save 25% when you subscribe to *Gardens Illustrated* this month, page 30*
- Win a trip to Orticolario, one of Italy's premier gardening events, held on the shores of Lake Como, page 105[†]
- Save 10% off plants at Sarah Raven, page 106[†]

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Claire photographs a New Hampshire garden, page 78. *"I was so glad I visited the Malts' garden twice to capture this beautiful light and mist in this gorgeous garden and landscape."*

KENDRA WILSON
Kendra visits Alex Mitchell's garden in Kent, page 42. *"Alex's garden is a personal memoir, evoking happy childhood memories. On another level, it is also entirely practical, in an unpredictable climate."*

MATTHEW REESE
Head gardener Matthew selects the best pennisetums, page 64. *"Pennisetums are one of the prettiest flowering grasses and are a wonderful component in the late border."*

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JAMES BASSON
James lives in the South of France where he runs Scape Design with his wife Helen, specialising in low-maintenance and dry gardens. He is a fervent advocate for creating sustainable landscapes. The winner of four Chelsea Gold medals, he was awarded Best in Show in 2017.

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Fergus was appointed head gardener at Great Dixter by Christopher Lloyd in 1993. He is passionate about passing on his knowledge through student and volunteer programmes at Dixter and through worldwide lectures. He was awarded an RHS Associate of Honour in 2008.

ANNA PAVORD
Anna's books include her bestseller *The Tulip* and most recently *Landskipping*. For 30 years she was *The Independent*'s gardening correspondent. In 2000 the RHS awarded her the Veitch Memorial Medal. She lives and gardens in Dorset.

DAN PEARSON
Dan is one of the UK's best-known garden designers, familiar to many through his gardening columns in the *Observer* magazine. Eight of his gardens, including the Tokachi Millennium Forest in Japan, have won awards and he was awarded Best in Show at Chelsea in 2015.

SARAH PRICE
Sarah is one of the UK's most sought-after garden designers who won worldwide recognition for her designs for the 2012 London Olympic Park. She won Gold at Chelsea in 2012 and 2018, and was GMG Garden Columnist of the year in 2016 for her design series in *Gardens Illustrated*.

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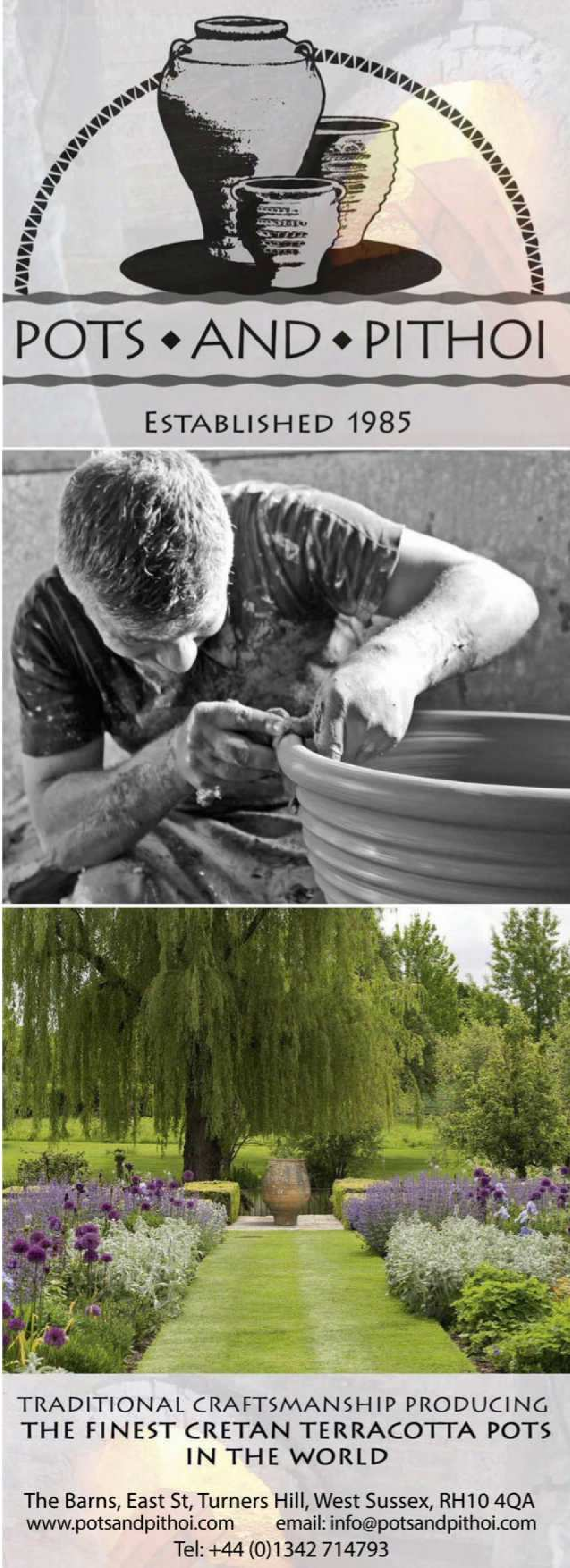
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DIG IN

What's happening, where to go, what's in flower and what to buy this month

ANNE TETZLAFF

GARDEN ART

If you're visiting Tate Britain this summer you may notice something a little different about the gallery's front lawn. The design collective Something & Son has transformed the space into a working garden, complete with a greenhouse and raised beds. The project called, Common Ground, hopes to address the problem of loneliness by encouraging social activity between visitors. Architectural elements, such as climbing plants, arch over pathways to draw people closer together and sculptures, with built in voice-recognition software, will flow with water when triggered by conversations nearby. Look out for the programme of events taking place in the garden over the summer, including a lunch on 8 September, prepared by Michelin-starred chef Skye Gyngell of Spring Restaurant in Somerset House, that will use ingredients grown in local allotments. Until 28 October, 10am-6pm. **tate.org.uk**

News

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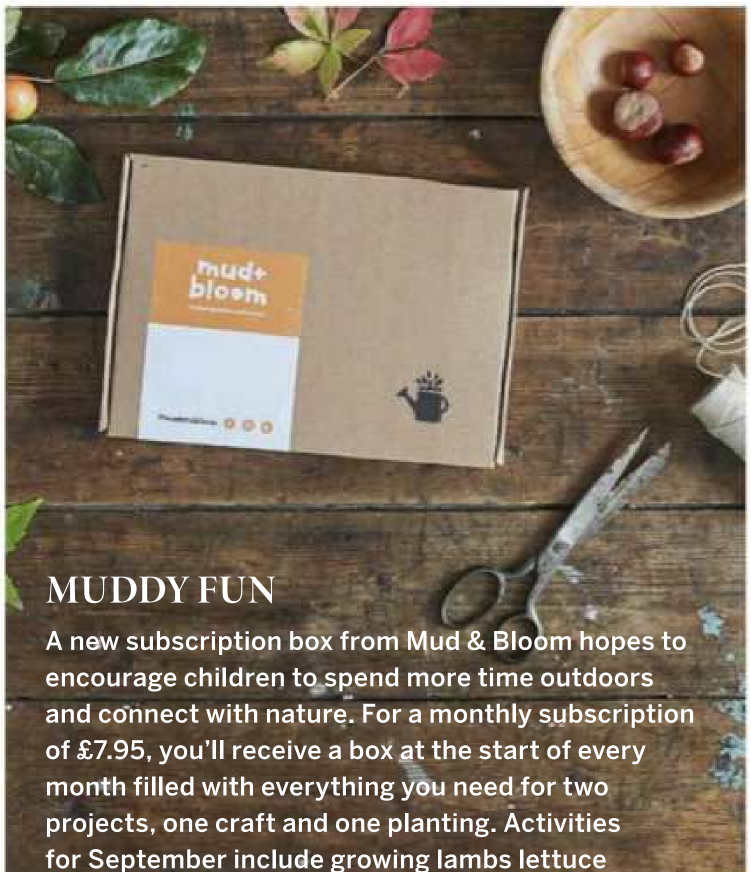
AUTUMN MASTERCLASS

Book ahead for the first Garden Masterclass Autumn Event taking place in the award-winning gardens of Forde Abbey in Dorset this October. The day will include talks from three fantastic plantswomen – Sarah Price, Rosy Hardy and Derry Watkins – who will be drawing on their combined years of horticultural experience to offer advice on extending the season until the first frosts, and on how to choose the best plants for autumn interest. In addition, Forde Abbey's head gardener, Danny Burlingham, will lead a tour of the gardens and the dahlia-filled late summer borders. 19 October, 10.30am-5pm. £140, including lunch. **gardenmasterclass.org**

EAT YOUR GREENS

Don't miss the final RHS flower show of the year. Highlights of this year's RHS Malvern Autumn Show, include the Autumn Potager Theatre, where food writer and former head gardener Mark Diacono will chat to guests Carol Klein, Joe Swift and Alys Fowler. The show will also see the return of the annual UK National Giant Vegetables Championship, which has four new categories including heaviest three sticks of rhubarb and longest radish. 29-30 September, 9am-6pm. £17. **rhs.org.uk**



MUDDY FUN

A new subscription box from Mud & Bloom hopes to encourage children to spend more time outdoors and connect with nature. For a monthly subscription of £7.95, you'll receive a box at the start of every month filled with everything you need for two projects, one craft and one planting. Activities for September include growing lambs lettuce and cress, and making an autumn nature mobile. **mudandbloom.com**

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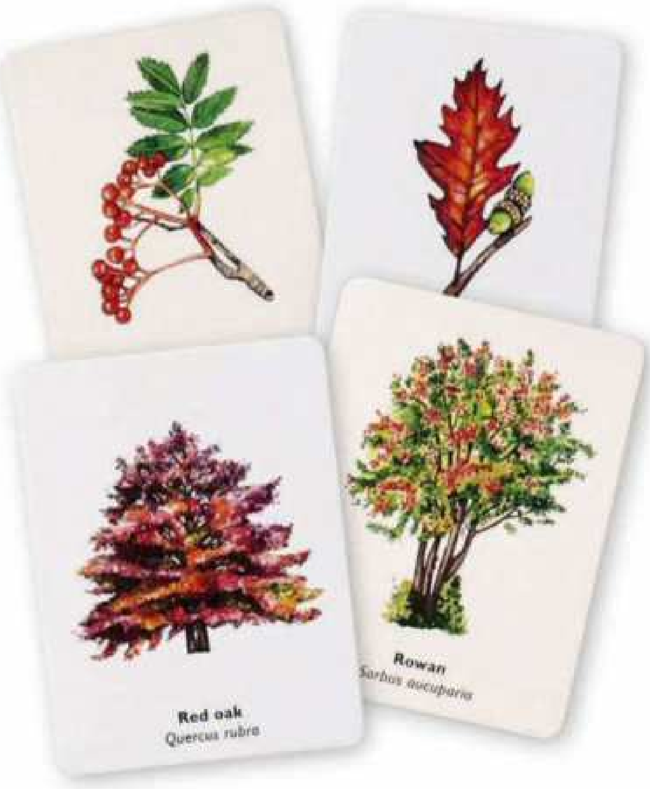
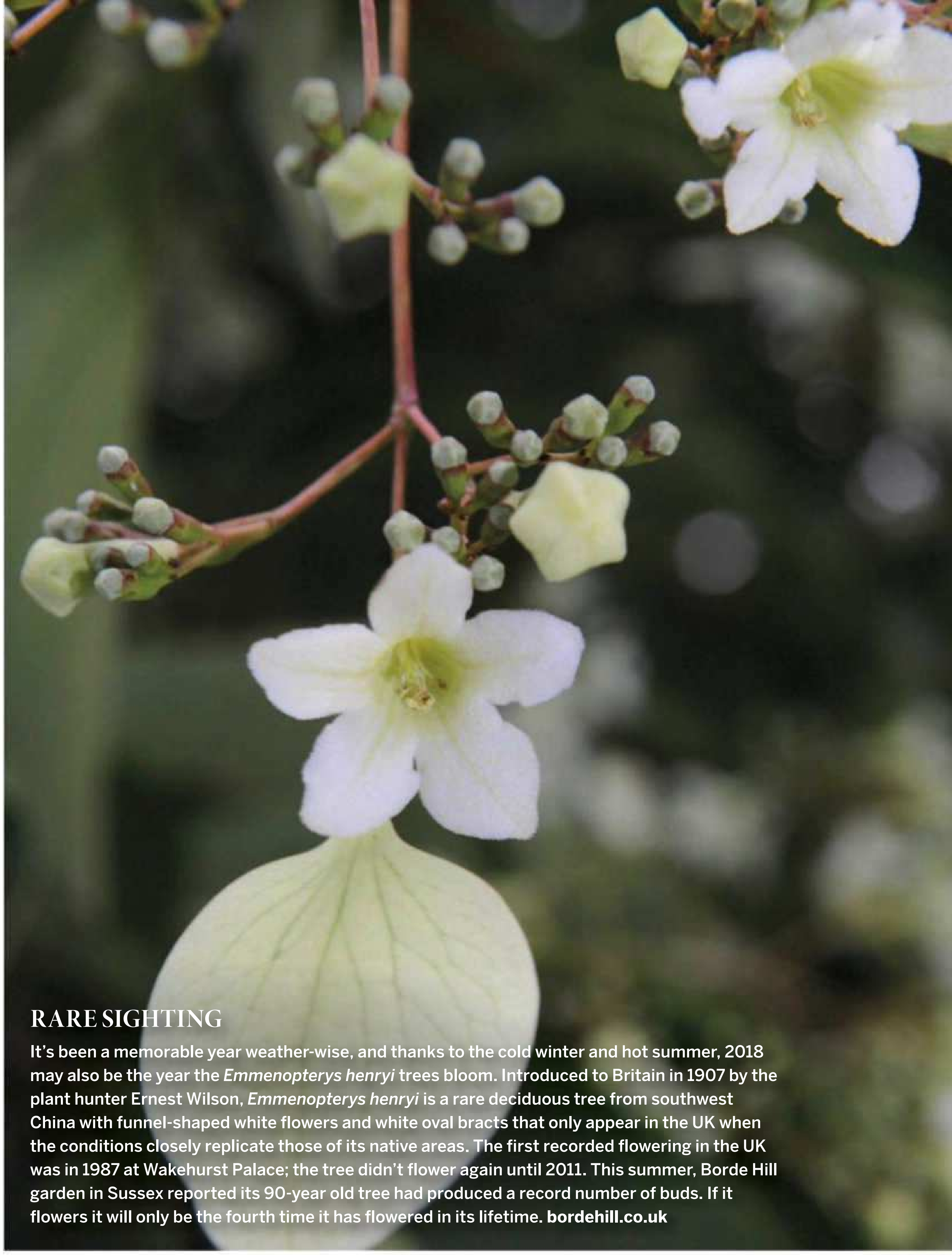
GOOD GAME

Head of Arboretum at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Tony Kirkham has written a guide to trees as part of the new Match A Leaf tree memory game. The aim of the game is to pair up leaves to their corresponding trees and the player with the most pairs wins. Learn to distinguish a horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) from a sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), as well as other fun facts. Both the cards and the guide have detailed illustrations by Holly Exley. Published by Laurence King, £14.99, **laurenceking.com**





RARE SIGHTING

It's been a memorable year weather-wise, and thanks to the cold winter and hot summer, 2018 may also be the year the *Emmenopterys henryi* trees bloom. Introduced to Britain in 1907 by the plant hunter Ernest Wilson, *Emmenopterys henryi* is a rare deciduous tree from southwest China with funnel-shaped white flowers and white oval bracts that only appear in the UK when the conditions closely replicate those of its native areas. The first recorded flowering in the UK was in 1987 at Wakehurst Palace; the tree didn't flower again until 2011. This summer, Borde Hill garden in Sussex reported its 90-year old tree had produced a record number of buds. If it flowers it will only be the fourth time it has flowered in its lifetime. **bordehill.co.uk**

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❶ **Floral Fantasia**
RHS Garden Hyde Hall has teamed up with Thompson & Morgan to create a large-scale display of more than 1,000 summer bedding plants planted in pots and hanging baskets. The display includes new introductions and offers a wealth of gardening inspiration for visitors. Until 30 September. RHS Garden Hyde Hall, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 8ET. Tel 01245 402019, rhs.org.uk

❷ **APLD International Design Conference**
Diversity by Design, the APLD's International Design Conference, takes place this year in Toronto. An impressive programme of garden and nursery visits, including rooftops and the restored Toronto waterfront, has been organised alongside the conference talks and discussions. 13-17 September. apld.org

❸ **The Art of Making Buildings**
A major retrospective of the work of one of the world's leading architects Renzo Piano, whose designs include The Shard in London and the Pompidou Centre in Paris, opens this month at the Royal Academy. 15 September – 20 January 2019, 10am-6pm. £14. Royal Academy, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1S 3ET. Tel 020 7300 8000, royalacademy.org.uk

❹ **Leed's Castle Festival of Flowers**
A selection of award-winning, international floral designers will create stunning displays inside and around the castle and give specialist talks, workshops and demonstrations during the five-day festival. 15-20 September, 10am-6pm. £25. Leeds Castle, Maidstone, Kent ME17 1PL. Tel 01622 765400, leeds-castle.com

❺ **Human Nature**
Follow a new sculpture trail, curated by Gallery Pangolin, through the romantic gardens of The Bishop's Palace in Wells, Somerset. Ten striking pieces by sculptors including Lynn Chadwick, Jon Buck and William Tucker, will be on show. 15 September – 25 November, 10am-4pm. Open daily. Standard garden admission. The Bishop's Palace, Wells, Somerset BA5 2PD. Tel 01749 988111, bishopspalace.org.uk

❻ **Tour Great Fosters**
Take a guided tour of one of the finest Arts and Crafts gardens in Europe in aid of Perennial, the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society. Includes buffet lunch. 18 September, 11am-3.30pm. £70. Great Fosters, Stroude Road, Egham, Surrey TW20 9UR. Tel 0800 093 8510, perennial.org.uk

❼ **Brilliant Bulbs**
Don't miss Sarah Raven's talk on the practicalities of bulb growing, just in time for planting spring bulbs. Sarah will recommend some of the best cultivars, and explain how to create a successful display for borders, pots and naturalising in grass. 18 September, 10.30am-3.30pm. £150. Parham Park, West Sussex RH20 4HS. Tel 0345 092 0283, sarahraven.com

❽ **Floral Art**
Using seasonal flowers, florist Shane Connolly will demonstrate how he creates his large, dramatic installations without using floral foam. The price of the one-day workshop, includes materials and a light lunch. 19 September, 10am-4pm. £325. Unit 7 Latimer Road Industrial Estate, Latimer Road, London W10 6RQ. Tel 020 8964 4398, shaneconnolly.co.uk

❾ **Distinctive Garden Design**
Acclaimed garden designer Jinny Blom will discuss the design of several of her recent commissions, from inception to completion, and reveal some of the practical decisions she had to make along the way. 20 September, 10.15am-1pm. £90. Coton Manor, Coton Road, Northampton NN6 8RQ. Tel 01604 740219, cotonmanor.co.uk

❿ **Propagation for Beginners**
Pick up tips and advice on how to give seeds and cuttings the best chance of growing into healthy plants from Chelsea Physic Garden head gardener Nell Jones. 20 September, 11.30am-1pm. £30. Chelsea Physic Garden, 66 Royal Hospital Road, London SW3 4HS. Tel 020 7352 5646, chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk

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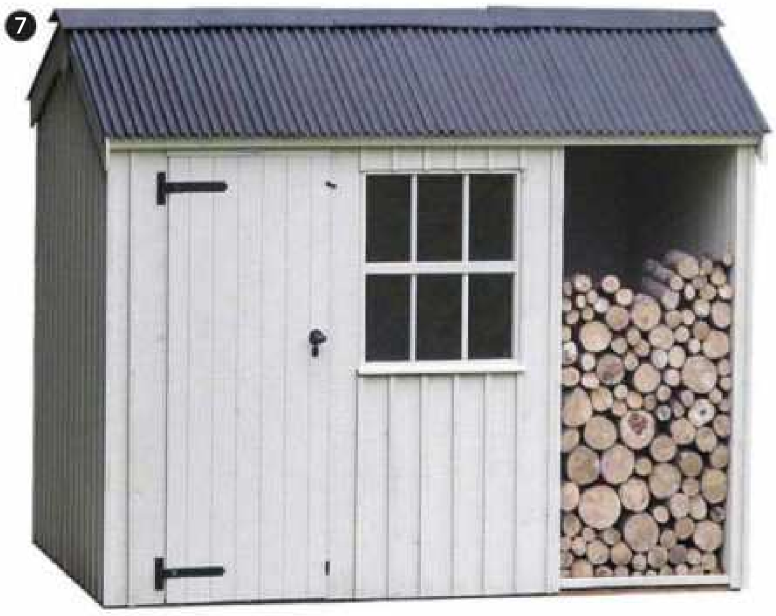

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The Outsider

Horticulturist Hannah Gardner visits the wild, Atlantic-facing Beara Peninsula in County Cork in the lichen-covered footsteps of Ireland's first woman botanist, Ellen Hutchins

WORDS **HANNAH GARDNER** ILLUSTRATION **ALICE PATTULLO**

The rugged, unspoilt Beara Peninsula is the wildest of the peninsulas in southwest Ireland. Here mountains meet the sea on the very edge of Europe. Admittedly, most wildflowers seen in Ireland are also to be found in Britain and northern Europe, Ireland's status as the most geographically isolated part of Europe (it has been an island for longer than Britain), restricted the number of plants that re-established themselves here after the last Ice Age. The floral range may be more limited than that of mainland Britain, but the mild maritime climate is forgiving, and there is a group of plants (collectively known as Lusitanian flora) that is native to Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula, but absent from much of the rest of Europe. These present an unresolved biogeographical puzzle.

Examples are the rare but include the handsome and fleshy St Patrick's cabbage (*Saxifraga spathularis*) and Irish spurge (*Euphorbia hyberna*). Colonising the roadsides alongside *Crocosmia* x *crocosmiiflora* and *Fuchsia*, the spurge foliage takes on a rich crimson hue as summer stretches into autumn.

The region around Bantry Bay is also home to some interesting horticulture. Notably the Harold Peto-designed Italian garden at the heart of Ilnacullin on Garnish Island, and the mature arboretum developed by the naturalist Ellen Hutchins at her coastal home Ardnagashel House.

Inspiration for the trip

I was keen to spend some time botanising in the homeland of William Robinson (1838-1935). Having read his books as a student, I recall him using wild Irish plants at his Sussex home, Gravetye Manor. Less well known, outside of Ireland, is the pioneering work of Ireland's first female botanist Ellen Hutchins (1785-1815) into seaweeds, lichens, mosses and liverworts. She is honoured each August with a week-long festival (ellenhutchins.com) that includes talks and workshops. I liked the idea of studying and preserving seaweeds 1800s style so I signed up for a few of the botanical workshops, and a seaweed and lichen study session with two charming and entertaining botanists from the National Botanic Gardens of Ireland.

When to go

August and September are wonderful times to visit County Cork. The narrow lanes and wide hedgerows are a riot of colour, the sea is warm, and whale watching boats leave from the quiet harbours.

Where to go

The Beara Peninsula is deceptively large with slow, winding lanes and steep remote hills so I combined hiking with driving. Hikes from Glengarriff take you through sessile oak woodland, heavy with moss, and up into the rugged Caha Mountains. Venture even further west and low, sandstone mountains (the Slieve Miskish) drop down to the boxy and charismatic 1960s Dursey Island cable car at the very tip of the peninsula.

The flora is varied and colourful. A gold and purple summer haze of moorland forms a mosaic with bright spongy sphagnum bogs that fill the wet hollows between the mountains. Along the coast a patchwork of small fields, the damp ones a mass of purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) and creamy meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), lead to deserted bays and hidden estuaries where glossy seaweeds float and the lilac flowers of sea aster (*Tripolium pannonicum*) pepper salty banks.

Join the Wild Atlantic Way between Allihies and Eyeries to cut across dramatic wild stretches of ancient red sandstone. The naturalised Chilean fuchsia (*Fuchsia magellanica*) roams freely here, romping across the exposed hills, reminding me that this now unfashionable shrub can be a beautiful billowing crimson and purple mass that jostles alongside gorse (*Ulex gallii*) and heather (*Calluna vulgaris* and *Erica cinerea*) quite happily given a wide expanse to dilute the effect.

Exploring Sheep's Head Peninsula, on the southerly side of Bantry Bay I met smooth-skinned horses as I strode across wide expanses of shimmering grassland, and then carefully navigated the mysterious blanket bogs. Here I found drifts of white tufty bog cotton (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) sticky sundews (*Drosera*), sedges, and the statuesque Royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), a native of Ireland. Dried by the wind and standing sentinel straight, the yellow star flowers of bog asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*) had dried to burnt ochre.

Plant to grow at home

The native flora of Ireland is punchy and vibrant in late summer. Especially eye-catching is the strawberry tree *Arbutus unedo*, a decorative evergreen shrub or small tree beloved by birds and bees. Normally associated with the Mediterranean it is also native to Ireland, an example of disjunct distribution. The first Irish specimen growing in the wild was recorded in 1835. Harvesting for charcoal has reduced the wild population, but you can find lovely mature specimens around Glengarriff. A pioneer plant, it is easy in cultivation being tolerant of frost, drought and salt.

Despite being a member of the *Ericaceae* family it is also relatively unfussy about soil pH. Its evergreen habit can be useful for wildlife-friendly privacy screening and as a wind barrier. The combination of glossy serrated dark leaves, the appearance of pale, sweetly scented flowers in autumn and bright-scarlet fruits make it a valuable addition to any garden. The antioxidant-rich fruits are also delicious in cakes and for jam. □

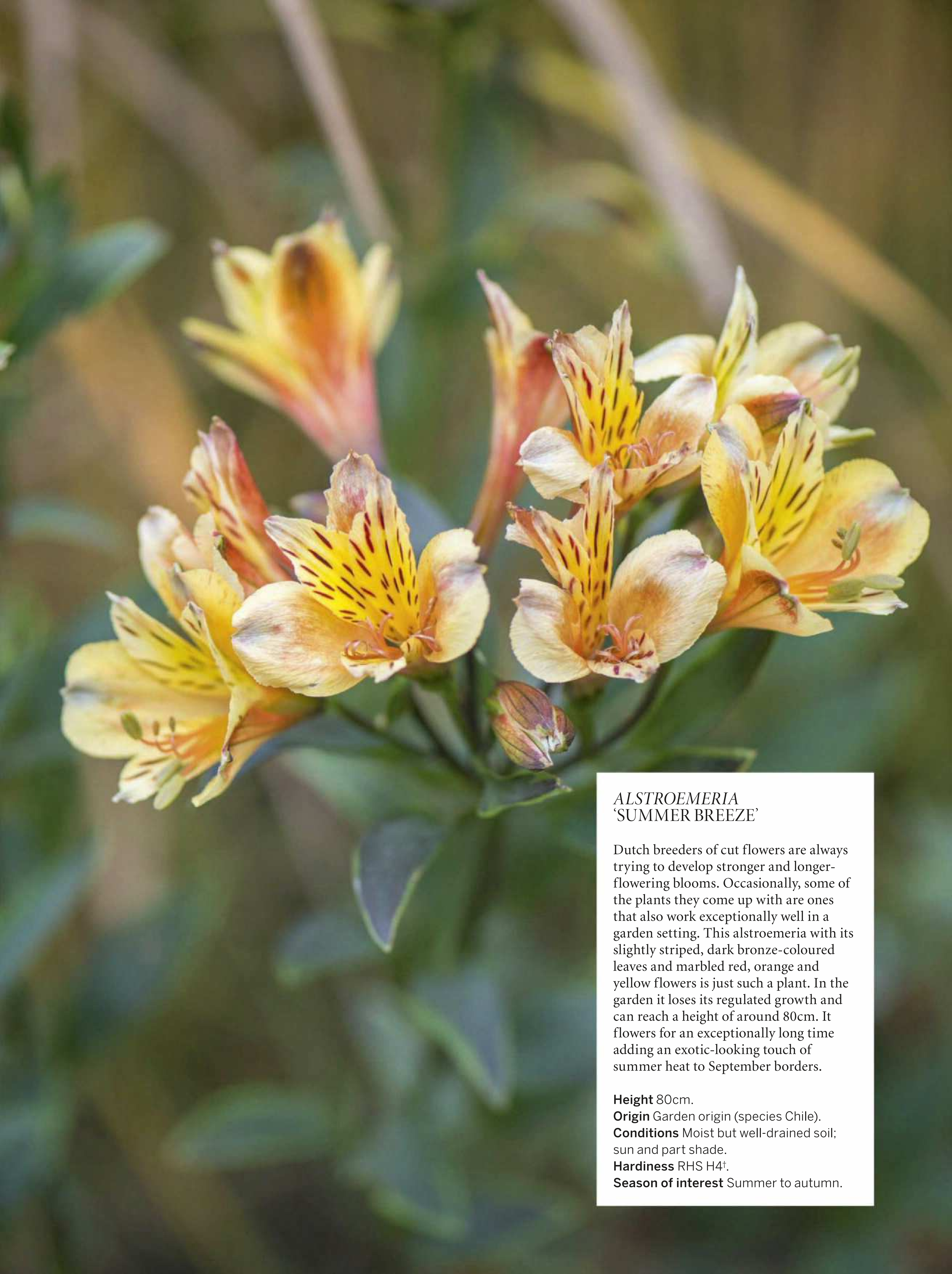
Guides and maps

Wildflowers of Cork City & County by Tony O'Mahony (Collins, 2009).

You can download maps at **irishtrails.ie**

Where to stay

Blairscove House & Restaurant
Blairscove, Murreagh, Durrus, Co Cork, P75FE44, Ireland. Tel +353 (0)27 61127, blairscove.ie offers stylish apartments in a coastal location. It also has an outstanding restaurant using locally sourced produce.



ALSTROEMERIA 'SUMMER BREEZE'

Dutch breeders of cut flowers are always trying to develop stronger and longer-flowering blooms. Occasionally, some of the plants they come up with are ones that also work exceptionally well in a garden setting. This alstroemeria with its slightly striped, dark bronze-coloured leaves and marbled red, orange and yellow flowers is just such a plant. In the garden it loses its regulated growth and can reach a height of around 80cm. It flowers for an exceptionally long time adding an exotic-looking touch of summer heat to September borders.

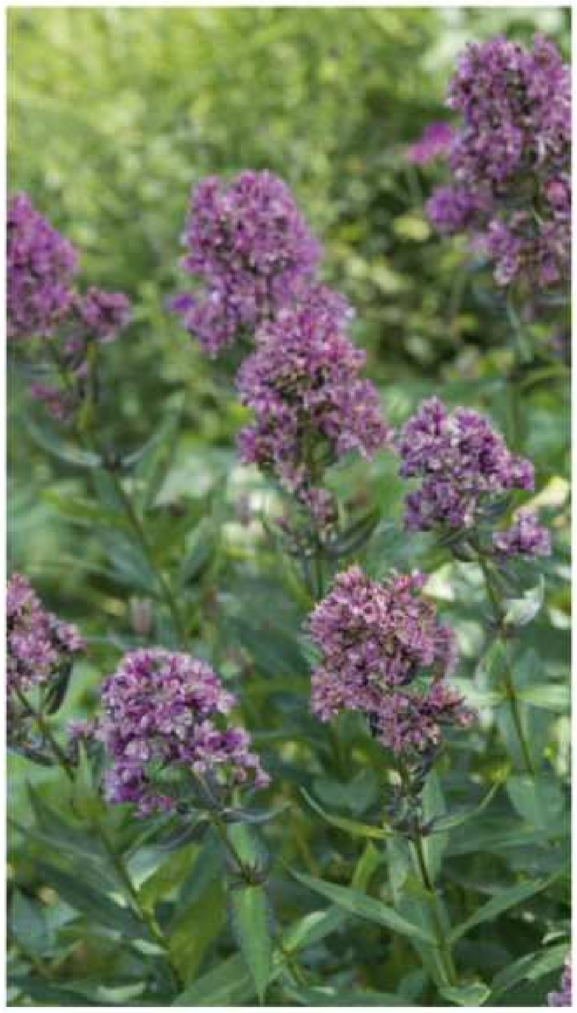
Height 80cm.
Origin Garden origin (species Chile).
Conditions Moist but well-drained soil; sun and part shade.
Hardiness RHS H4[†].
Season of interest Summer to autumn.

SEPTEMBER PLANTS

The days may be cooling down but the colours are still hot in Fleur's borders with an exotic-looking alstroemeria and a low-growing helenium, among her choices this month

WORDS FLEUR VAN ZONNEVELD PHOTOGRAPHS MAAYKE DE RIDDER

Fleur van Zonneveld runs the Dutch nursery De Kleine Plantage. **dekleineplantage.nl**



PHLOX PANICULATA 'NATURAL FEELINGS'

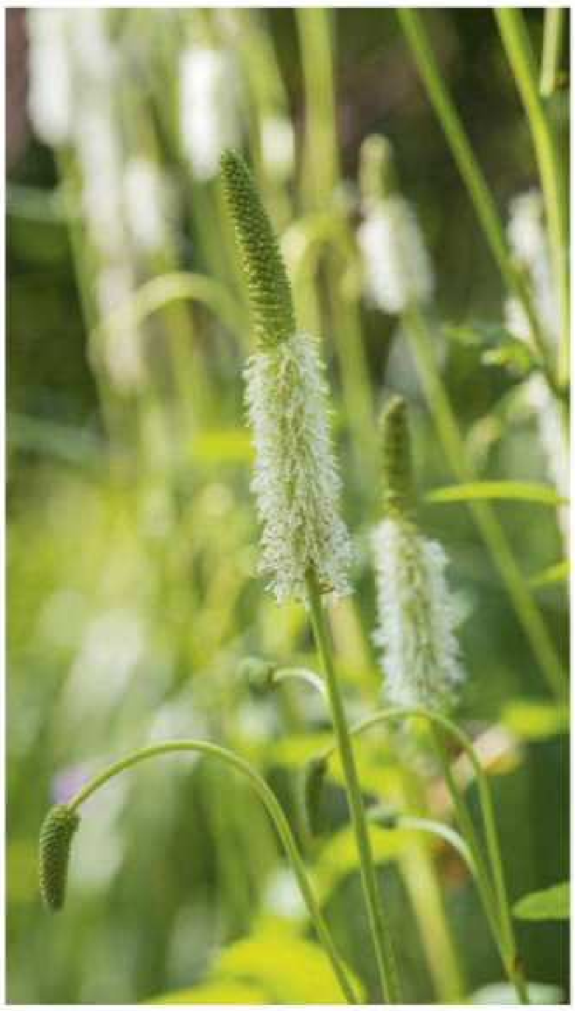
What a bizarre-looking phlox this is. I sometimes think 'Unnatural Feelings' might have been a better name, as it's not at all what you'd expect from a *Phlox paniculata*. The panicles – which are composed of red-pink flowers with a centre of pale-green petaloid stamens – look like wrinkled little umbels, made out of small, paper pouches. Despite its unusual appearance, it is a good and healthy grower, and the panicles last for several months making it a striking and civilised addition to the border.

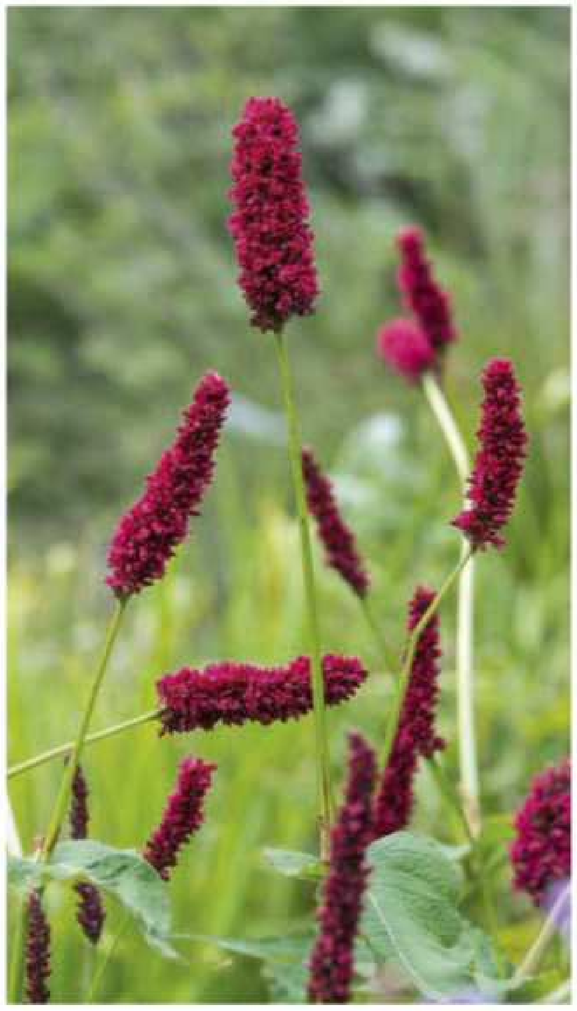
Height 80cm.
Origin Garden origin (species North America).
Conditions Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest Mid to late summer.

SANGUISORBA CANADENSIS

Sanguisorba is a genus we love a lot. It creates a wonderful feel of airiness and looseness in naturalistic plantings, and this tall, white burnet adds a wonderful airy feel, especially when grown en masse as the late-flowering spikes tend to appear one by one – and a mix of opened and unopened flowers looks fabulous. We grow it alongside the even taller, dark-red *Sanguisorba* 'Cangshan Cranberry', which we got from Graham Gough at Marchants Hardy Plants, the dark-pink *S. menziesii* and our own selection the red *S. officinalis* 'Rock and Roll'. A winning combination.

Height 1.5m.
Origin North America.
Conditions Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.





PERSICARIA AMPLEXICAULIS 'BLACK ADDER'

This relatively short persicaria is characterised by its large, thick, dark-red spikes that bow deeply after a rain shower. It's a selection from the Belgian breeder and persicaria expert Chris Ghyselen, who seems to delight in creating the chunkiest possible flowers. We like to combine striking persicarias, such as this, with a spectacular phlox, such as *Phlox paniculata* 'Eva Foerster', which makes an intense and unlikely, almost kitsch, combination. So exciting and highly recommended. Definitely, one to try for yourself.

Height 70cm.
Origin Garden origin (species Himalayas).
Conditions Moisture-retentive soil; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

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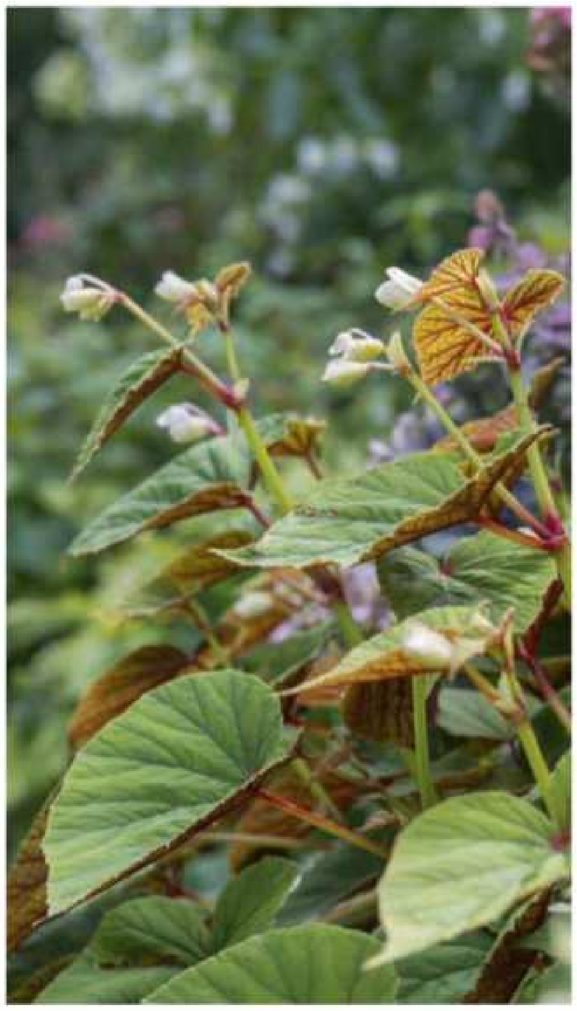


BEGONIA GRANDIS SUBSP. *EVANSIANA* VAR. *ALBA*

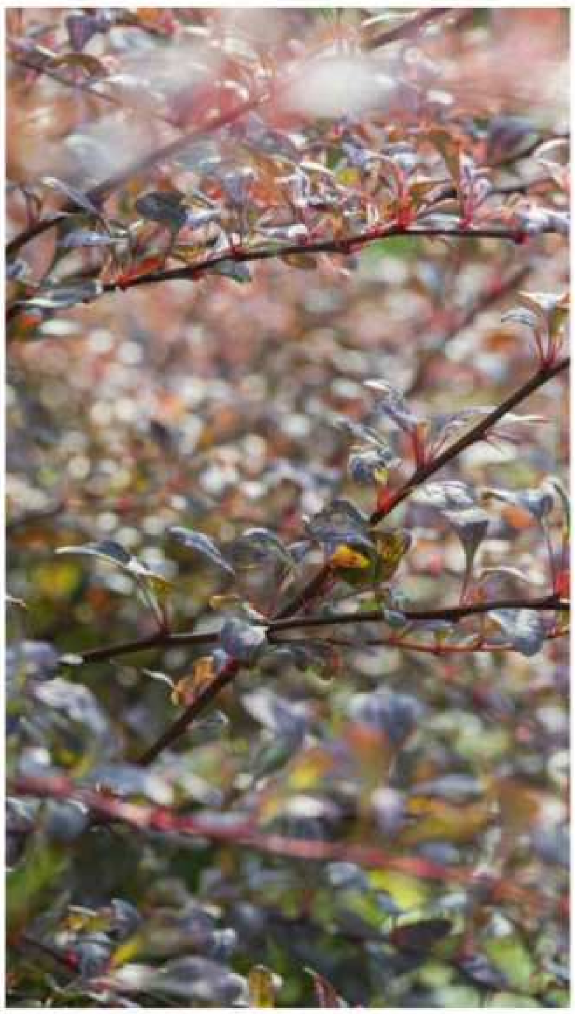
I like begonias mainly for their asymmetrical leaves and their long flowering period, but if, like this one, they are also hardy, then all the better. Sometimes, when I've grown this particular one in a pot, I've thought that it might not have survived the winter, as often it can be hard to see if it is still there or not until June. Then all of a sudden, it comes to life in all its glory. It has delicate, white flowers and the undersides of the leaves are burgundy coloured. It even grows on dry, shady ground.

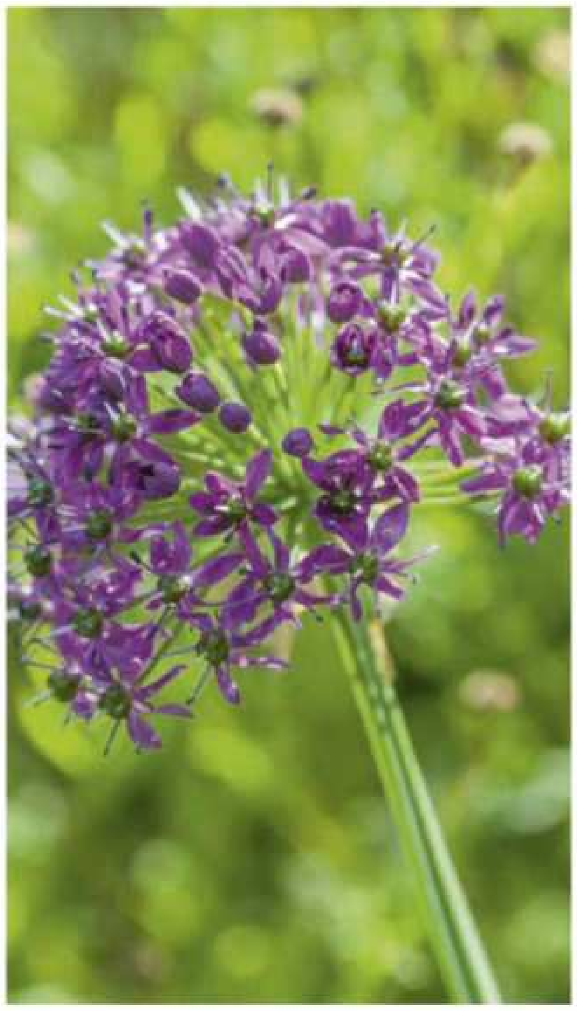
Height 50cm.
Origin China, Japan.
Conditions Well-drained soil; part shade.
Hardiness RHS H4, USDA 6a-9b.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.

*BERBERIS THUNBERGI*I F. *ATROPURPUREA* 'ROSE GLOW'

In the Netherlands, where *Berberis thunbergii* is often planted in public parks, many garden enthusiasts actively dislike these thorny bushes, considering them merely a municipal plant. But, if pruned just once early in the year, this cultivar rewards you with pronounced spotted red leaves, and when neatly pruned into a dome shape is a great addition to the border. Even in winter its filigree habit adds structure between the skeletons of spent perennials.

Height 1.5m.
Origin Garden origin (species Japan).
Conditions Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest Year round.





ALLIUM WALLICHII

Allium wallichii is something of an oddity among the extensive *Allium* genus, which includes more than 600 species. It comes from the Himalayas, where it grows from bulbils produced at the end of stolons at altitudes of more than 2,000m in relatively damp meadow. It flowers in late summer – from August to October – and doesn't start into growth until late spring, with its leaves beginning to die back at a similar time to the early blooming alliums. It's a purple-pink colour with large, round umbels, made up of fine, star-shaped flowers.

Height 45cm.
Origin Himalayas, southwest China.
Conditions Moist soil; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7.
Season of interest Late summer to autumn.

PLACES TO VISIT

Recommended places to see seasonal plants at their best both in Europe and the UK

Grasses come to the fore in late summer and autumn and one of our favourite gardens to see them at their best is **Jakobstuin**, in the northern Netherlands. It's a good example of the new perennial planting inspired by the likes of Piet Oudolf and Cassian Schmidt and the prairie style championed by Jan Spruyt where grasses play an even more prominent role, along with plenty of echinaceas, sanguisorbas and agastaches. The garden is part of a larger property, de Coulisse, which offers bed and breakfast accommodation. Tillewei 21, 9258 GP, Eestrum, Friesland, the Netherlands. Tel +31 (0)512 843667, decoulisse.nl

Around 40 miles south of Rotterdam, on the outskirts of the old city of Dordrecht, is **Villa Augustus** a hotel and restaurant located in an old water tower overlooking the Wantij. Set in what was originally the water basin for the tower is a garden of more than 1.5 hectares that includes, a vegetable garden, an orchard, an Italian garden and a small grove. The vegetable garden where the vegetables are combined with roses, flowers, berries and fruit trees, always looks spectacular in late summer and early autumn. You don't have to stay in the hotel to explore the garden, but you might want to try the restaurant. Oranjelaan 7, 3311 DH Dordrecht, the Netherlands. Tel +31 (0)78 639 3111, villa-augustus.nl

We have known Roger and Linda Bastin for a ▷

VITIS VINIFERA 'PURPUREA'

We love purple-coloured leaves – and while there is a wealth of red-leaved perennials, annuals, trees and shrubs to choose from there are fewer options when it comes to climbers. Essentially the choice is between a single *Clematis montana* and this *Vitis vinifera*, which has lobed leaves that are purple-tinted in summer and turn a richer plum colour later in autumn. The leaves are beautiful, but the grapes are not particularly worth picking – even birds reject them – but they will hang on a wall or pergola until December. AGM*.

Height 8m.
Origin Garden origin (species central and southern Europe).
Conditions Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H6.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.

HELENIUM 'LITTLE ORANGE'

Heleniums always brighten late summer. Their firmness, health and warm red-brown to yellow colour makes them highly appealing. Many grow up to 1.5m, but this warm-orange cultivar selected by the Dutch breeder Henk Jacobs in 2007 is very short. Henk found the seedling growing among grasses and calls it a 'gift from the garden'. We have to agree. It has all the characteristics you would want from a helenium and the fact it is so low-growing makes it even more attractive. Occasionally, yellow flowers pop up, adding an extra element of fun.

Height 70cm.
Origin Garden origin (species North America).
Conditions Moist but well-drained soil; full sun.
Hardiness RHS H6.
Season of interest Summer to autumn.

VERBENA OFFICINALIS VAR. *GRANDIFLORA* 'BAMPTON'

Some people find that this verbena self-seeds as voraciously as the better-known *Verbena bonariensis*. Although this can create a lot of extra work, we think this long-flowering verbena with its loose habit and purple leaves is worth the trouble. It is the perfect filler for an empty spot with neutral, soft-lilac spikes that actually fit everywhere even in pots. In the winter it dries to a sturdy skeleton with ornamental value. Always leave the darkest coloured seedlings, otherwise the colour of the leaves becomes lighter.

Height 60cm.
Origin Garden origin (species Europe).
Conditions Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H6.
Season of interest Summer to winter.

▷ long time. They're passionate growers with an overriding concern for nature. Their organic nursery **Bastin**, in the southern Dutch province of Limburg, specialises in Mediterranean plants, including salvias, lavenders, rosemary and thyme, making a visit to the nursery an olfactory, as well as a visual delight. The nursery, which also includes a vegetable garden, chickens, bees and sheep, is worth a visit at any time but its Salvia and Prairie Plant days, which this year take place on 25-26 August, are especially worth a visit. Nieuwenhuysstraat 29 6336 XV Aalbeek, Limburg, the Netherlands. Tel +31 (0)45 5231475, bastin.nl

Early autumn is a great time to visit the **High Line** park in New York. Located on a 2.3km-long former train track built in the 1930s, it stands out for its planting schemes designed by the Dutch designer Piet Oudolf. You can join the park at several points between West 34th Street and Ganesvoort Street, several of which can be accessed via lifts. High Line Start Point, 5861 High Line, New York, NY 10001, USA 91 Gansevoort St, New York, NY 10014, USA. Tel +1 212 500 6035, thehighline.org

The almost desolate garden created by the late film director Derek Jarman on the shingle of his home at **Prospect Cottage**, is one that many people visit in early summer garden, but I think this garden, near Dungeness nuclear power station, is best seen in early autumn when it seems especially atmospheric. It isn't open to the public as such but you are welcome to view it from the beach. As Jarman himself wrote: 'Paradise haunts gardens, and some gardens are paradises. Mine is one of them. Others are like bad children, spoilt by their parents, over-watered and covered with noxious chemicals.' Unforgettable.

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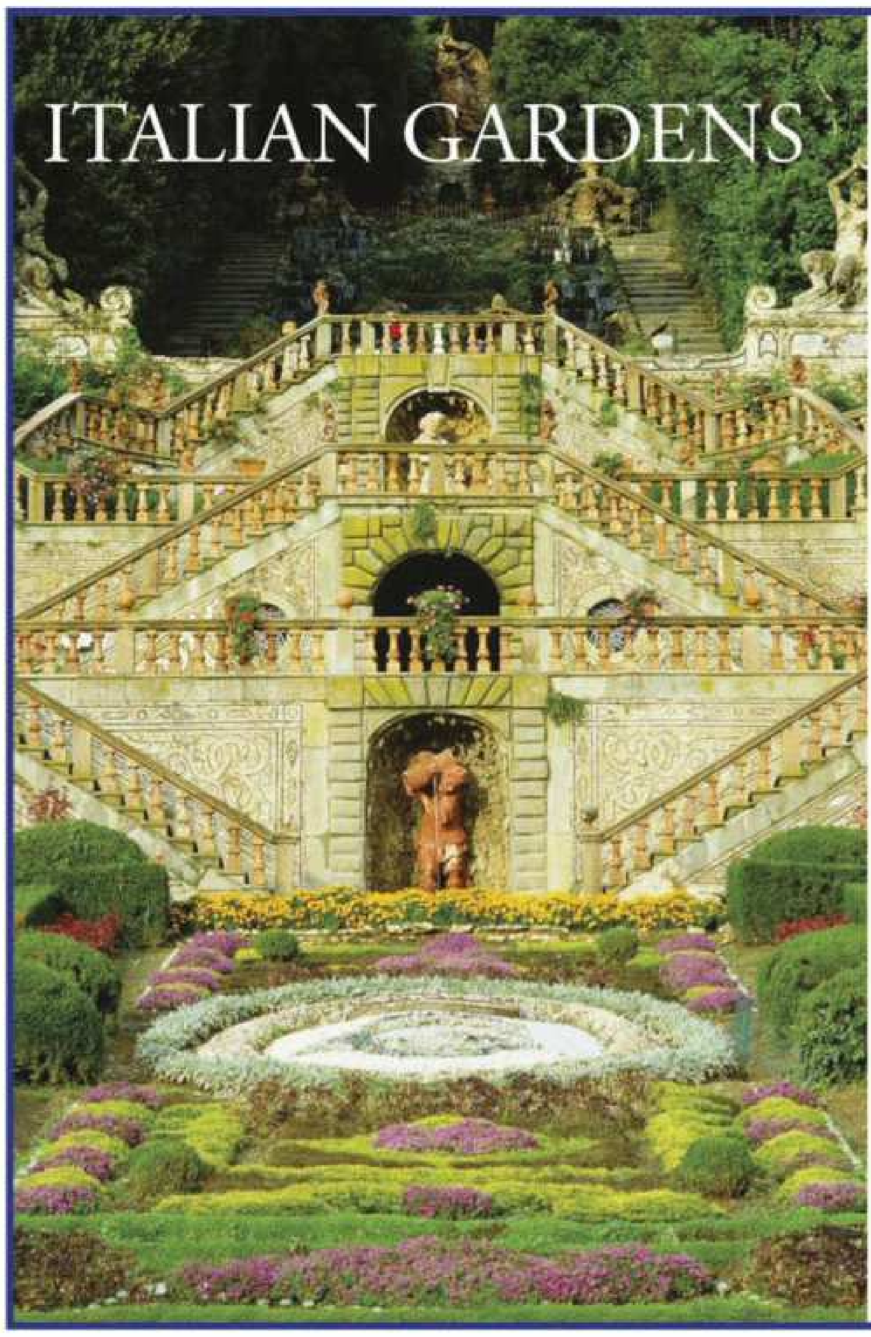

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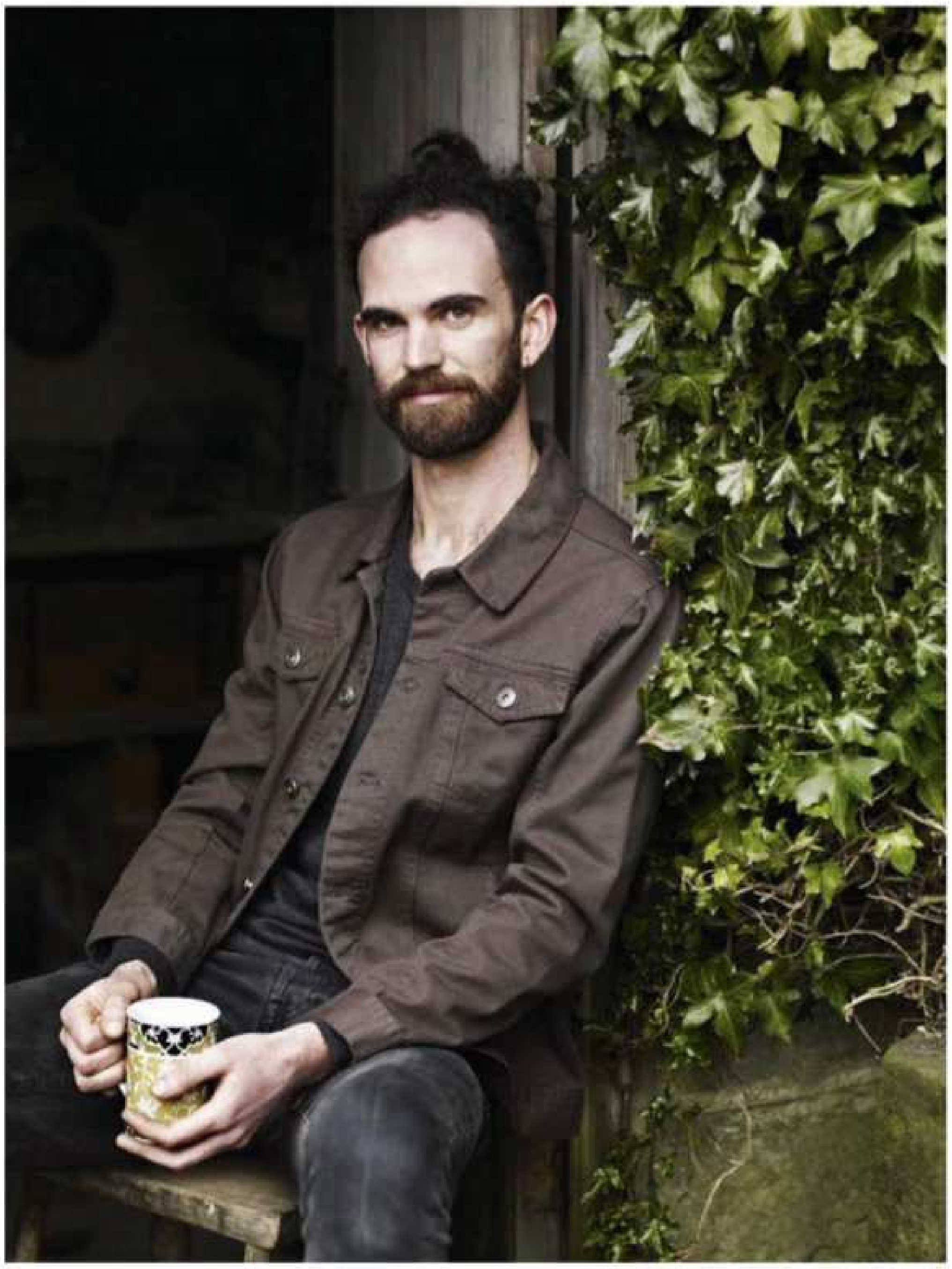

GARDENING TALENT

Artur Serra Costa

Having grown up in rural Spain, Artur has an appreciation for plants in their natural environment. He's now a trainee gardener at private garden Mount St John in North Yorkshire

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Early gardening memory My grandpa had fields where he grew veg to sell at the market. My sister, our cousins and I were supposed to help, but we just ran through a labyrinth of tomato plants growing up tall canes under the sprinklers, ate juicy warm peaches from the trees and feasted on peas at sunset. My favourite playground.

Your career path to horticulture I graduated with a degree in Fine Arts, but was worried by the high level of unemployment among young people in Spain, so I went abroad to volunteer in different projects. I learned about permaculture, sustainable architecture and community building, and soon enough I thought gardening would be my way to contribute to a healthier environment.

Good advice for every gardener Get a feel for the seasonal changes, and the different paces at which the garden evolves, and always bear in mind the long-term effects of what you do.

Most valuable training Gathering hands-on work experience from the very beginning of my career, and being surrounded by inspiring and knowledgeable people throughout have been, and continue to be, two of the most valuable features of my professional training. I am also currently doing the RHS level 2 course at Askham Bryan.

Dream plant destination I want to visit the Atacama Desert in Chile that gets covered in a carpet of flowers after it rains (but this might not happen again for another 14 years); the bridges made from living roots in the Meghalaya region in India; or the wild meadows of *Miscanthus sinensis* in Japan.

Unsung hero of the plant world As most of the plants that grow in Britain were new to me, I didn't have any preconceptions and was quite impressed with *Symphytum grandiflorum* when I noticed its incredibly long flowering season throughout spring – providing nectar for the first bumblebees. I like how the colour varies as the flower ages, how good it is as groundcover, and how little (if any) attention it needs, plus its composting value and medicinal uses.

What's the next big project you'll be tackling in the garden We are trying different ways of dealing with a seemingly unstoppable invasion of wild garlic in the woodland garden; so the next big project will be to bring in approximately 90 tonnes of soil to create mounds on top of the garlic to give other groundcover a better chance to establish.

Contact arturserracosta@gmail.com **Instagram** artur.serra.costa

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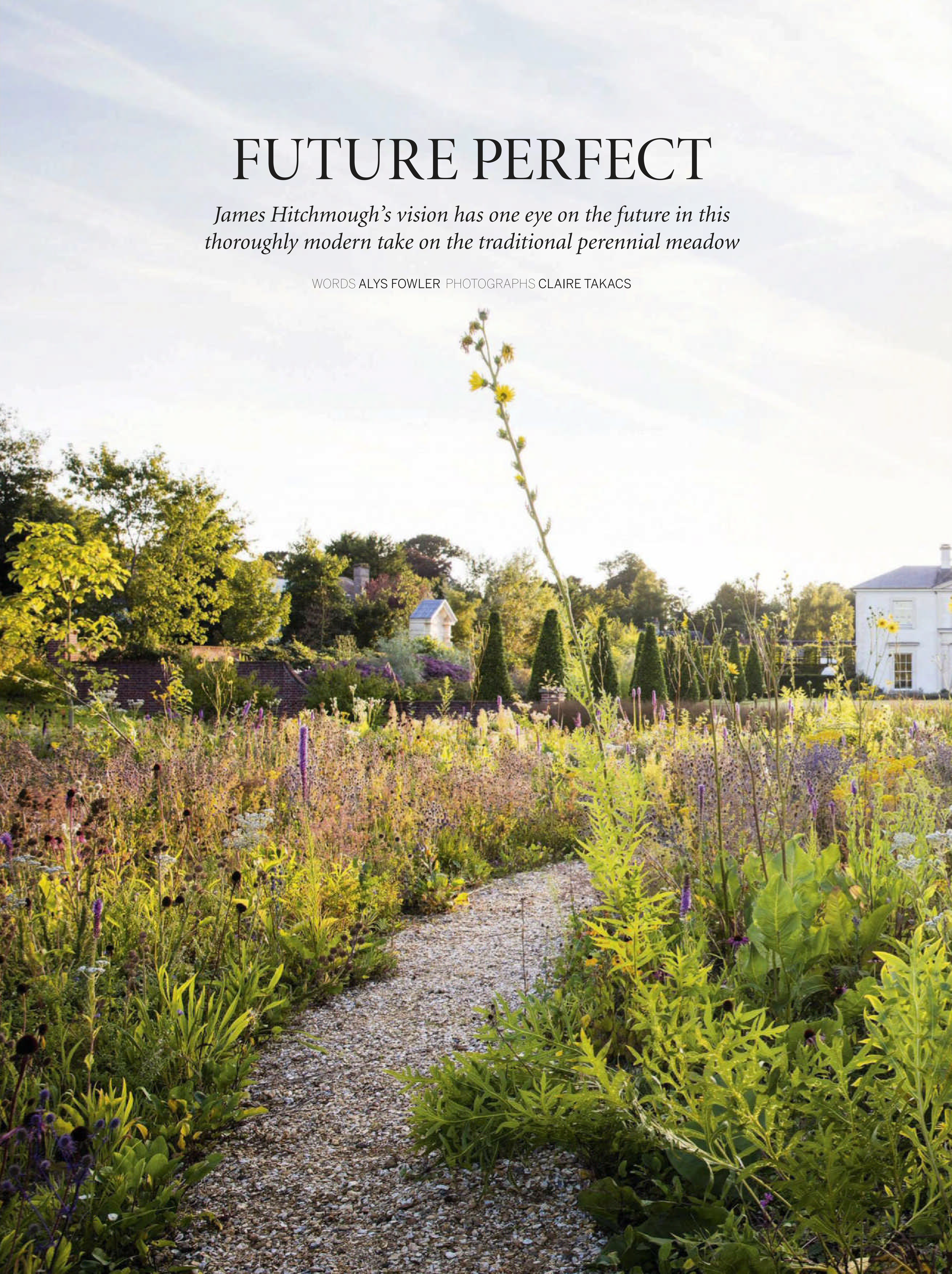
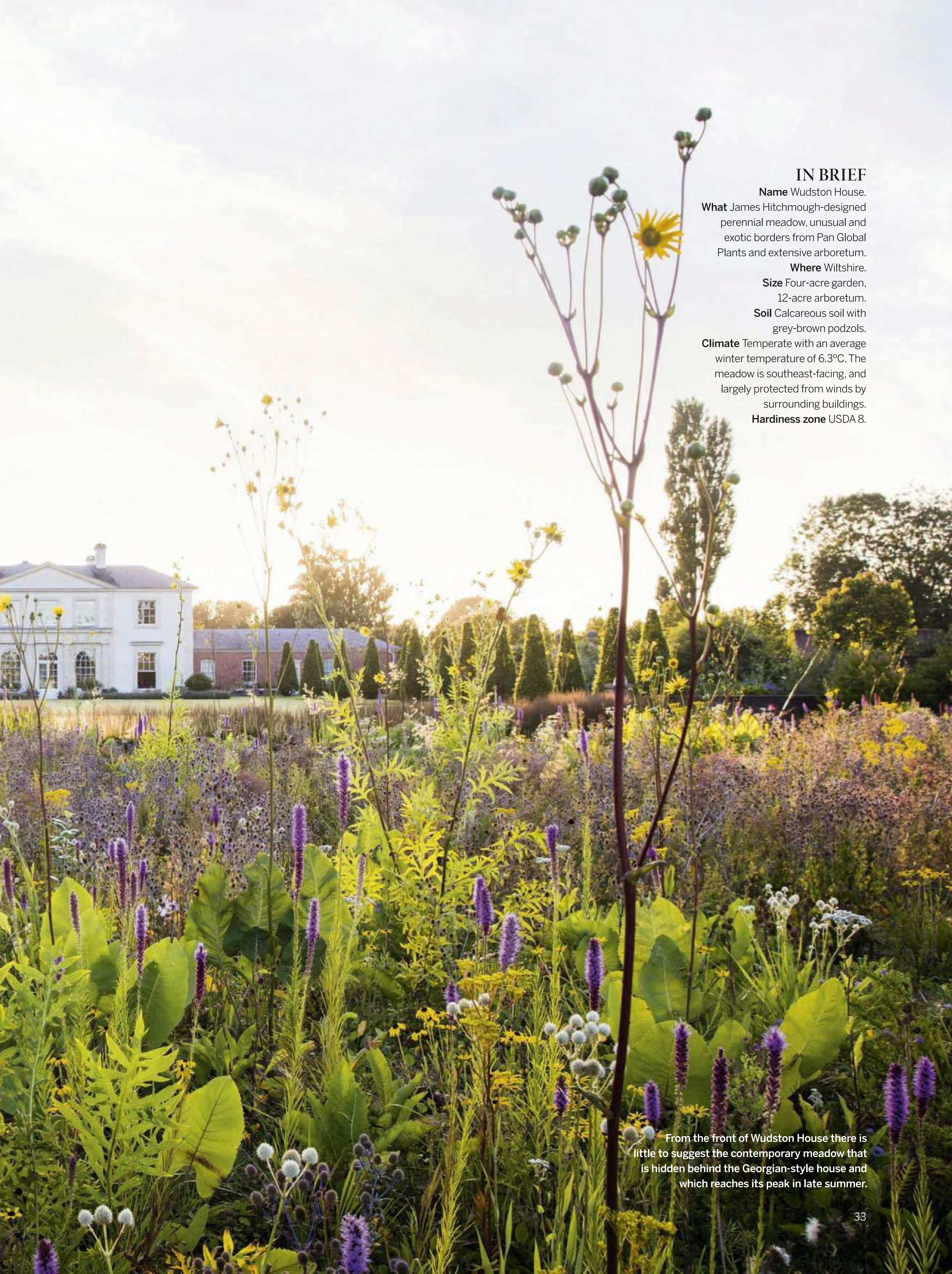
FUTURE PERFECT

James Hitchmough's vision has one eye on the future in this thoroughly modern take on the traditional perennial meadow

WORDS **ALYS FOWLER** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLAIRE TAKACS**





IN BRIEF

Name Wudston House.
What James Hitchmough-designed perennial meadow, unusual and exotic borders from Pan Global Plants and extensive arboretum.
Where Wiltshire.
Size Four-acre garden, 12-acre arboretum.
Soil Calcareous soil with grey-brown podzols.
Climate Temperate with an average winter temperature of 6.3ºC. The meadow is southeast-facing, and largely protected from winds by surrounding buildings.
Hardiness zone USDA 8.

From the front of Wudston House there is little to suggest the contemporary meadow that is hidden behind the Georgian-style house and which reaches its peak in late summer.

David Morrison's enthusiasm for plants is obvious the minute you walk through his front door to be greeted by two huge displays of tropical bromeliads. It's a hint at what lies behind the house, although nothing quite prepares you for what unfurls: a vision so brilliant and unexpected that it quite takes your breath away.

The farmhouse is a flawless take on a Palladian villa, with elegant Doric arches and clean columns. The 16th-century Italian architect Andrea Palladio was famous for rarely contemplating the design of the gardens behind his villas, but you might expect a man who admires such a classical style to have, say, a formal parterre or two at the rear, or some well-ordered symmetry with a fountain and pond at the end of the central axis. Instead what you get is a very clever twist.

Behind the house is a garden that makes all the right nods to its classical setting: a beautiful pergola, long borders, a double row of neatly clipped trees and a sweep of lawn. Then, between the formal garden and the arboretum beyond, lies the surprise.

For here is James Hitchmough's very modern making of a meadow, which happily blends the best of European and Asian species with plants from North America and South Africa. Sown from seed in 2014, this perennial meadow has been skilfully designed: the height is such that from the house you get a gently hazy vision that allows you to appreciate the landscape beyond, but up close you are treated to a feast of unexpected colour and detail, the planting rich in species diversity.

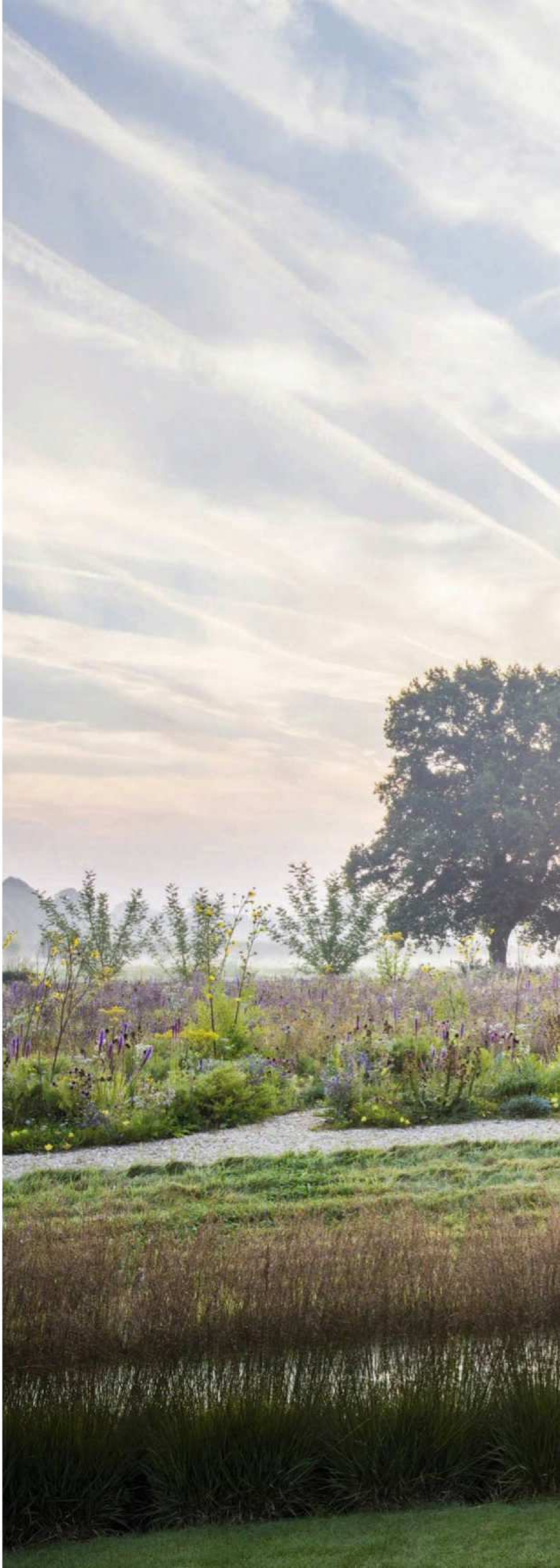
"The thing I like about the meadow is its context with the rest of the garden," says David. "The house could have been built 200 years ago and the garden has a conventional layout, but the planting in the garden, the meadow and even the arboretum is of the moment. It's not backward looking. James is a scientist and a plant ecologist, driven by an interest in urban green spaces and planting combinations that look after themselves."

Meadows are an ideal ecological model in that sense, and David felt passionately that his garden should reflect such ideas. "James's convictions are not just pertinent, but very relevant to 21st-century gardening. If one is lucky enough to start a garden from scratch, why not think about what the future holds, and how the garden will function within that scenario?"

On James's part, a private client offered a degree of freedom to experiment with plant selection. "The challenging thing about these meadows is you never really know what's going to be successful," he explains. "Working with David allowed me to be semi-experimental and put some quirky stuff in that might or might not work. David is very passionate about the meadow and it's become the basis of our friendship. It's a lot of fun to have a meadow like that at the bottom of the garden."

David is honest about the challenges of growing a perennial meadow from seed. "For the first two years, there is quite a lot of weeding work, and Carol, my head gardener, has done a very good job." First, the area was treated with weed killer, then the paths were laid out, and finally the whole area ▷

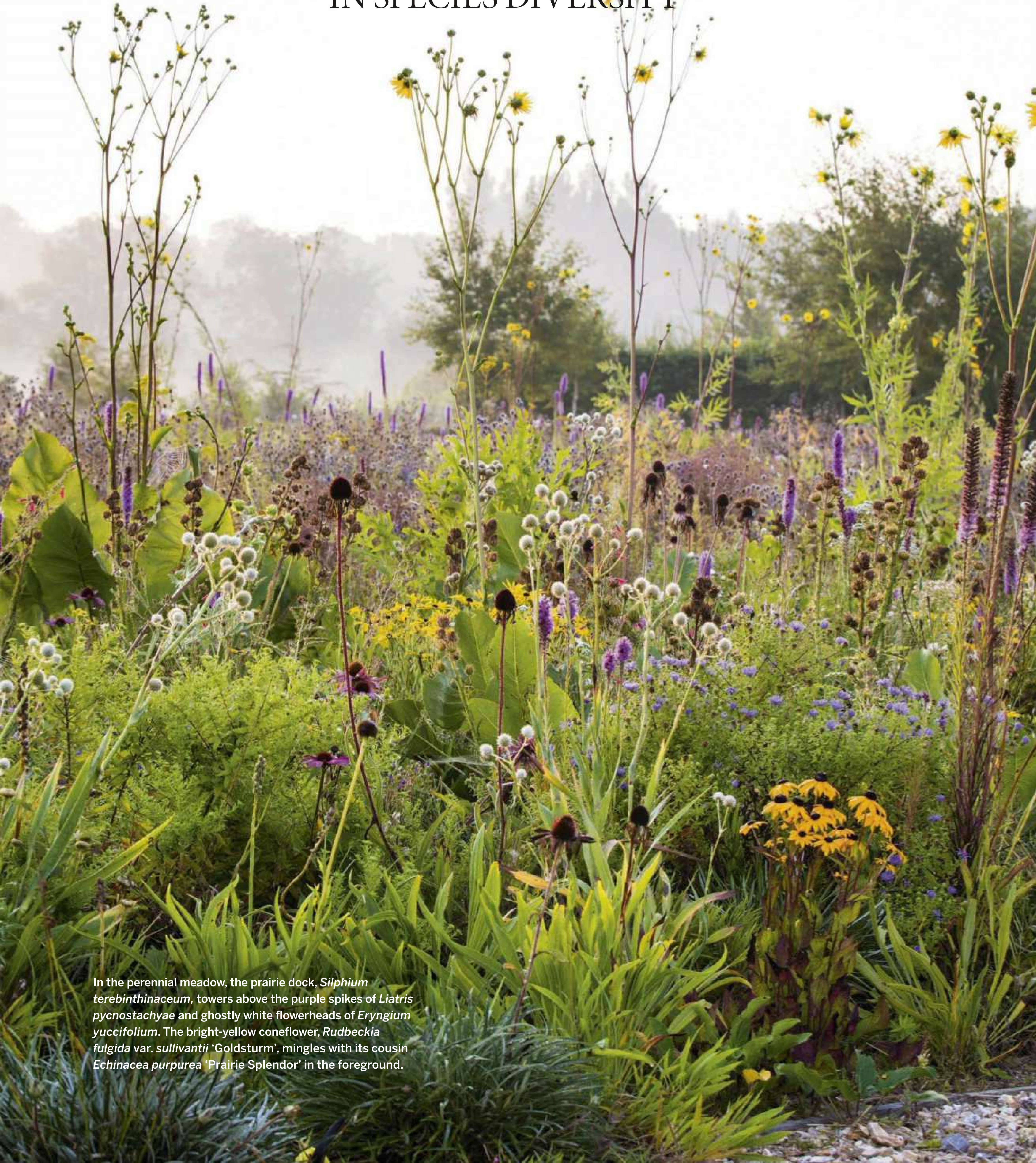
Turn to page 40 to continue



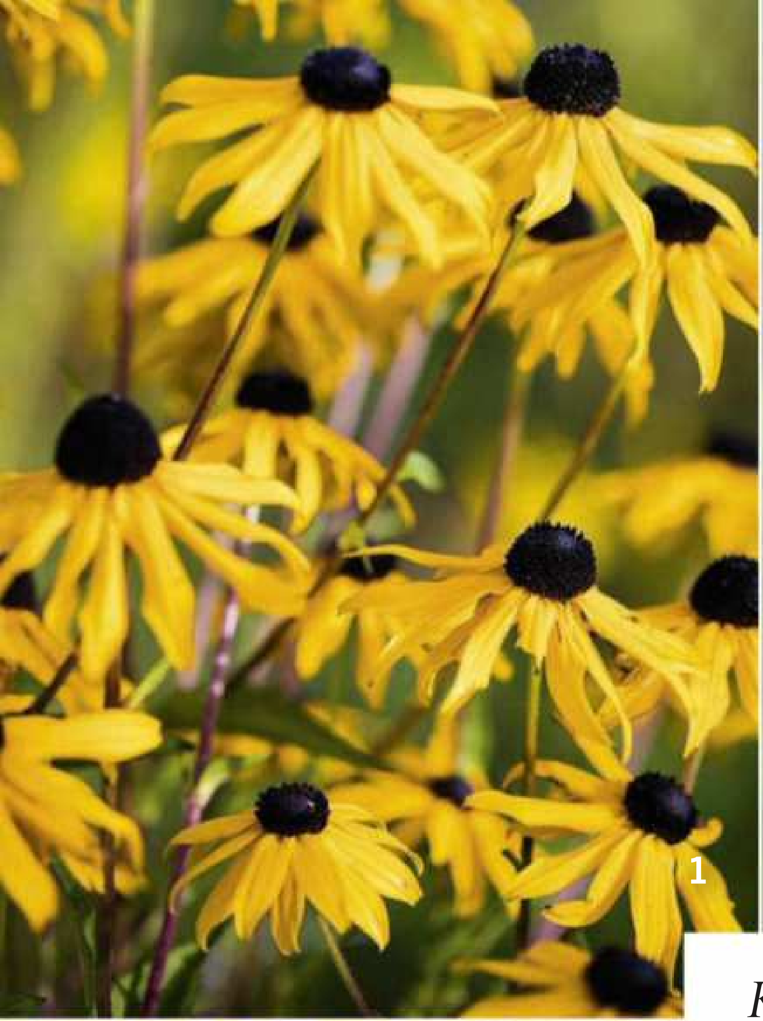
Right This modern perennial meadow was chosen for a long season of interest and reflects a diverse group of plants from Europe, Asia, North America and South Africa. Designed by James Hitchmough, head of landscape at the University of Sheffield, it reflects the best of new meadows, spontaneous and playful, yet thoughtfully placed within the context of the wider landscape.

FROM THE HOUSE YOU GET A GENTLY HAZY VISION THAT ALLOWS YOU TO APPRECIATE THE LANDSCAPE BEYOND

> CLOSE UP YOU ARE TREATED TO A FEAST OF UNEXPECTED COLOUR AND DETAIL, THE PLANTING RICH IN SPECIES DIVERSITY



In the perennial meadow, the prairie dock, *Silphium terebinthinaceum,* towers above the purple spikes of *Liatris pycnostachyae* and ghostly white flowerheads of *Eryngium yuccifolium*. The bright-yellow coneflower, *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *sullivantii* 'Goldsturm', mingles with its cousin *Echinacea purpurea* 'Prairie Splendor' in the foreground.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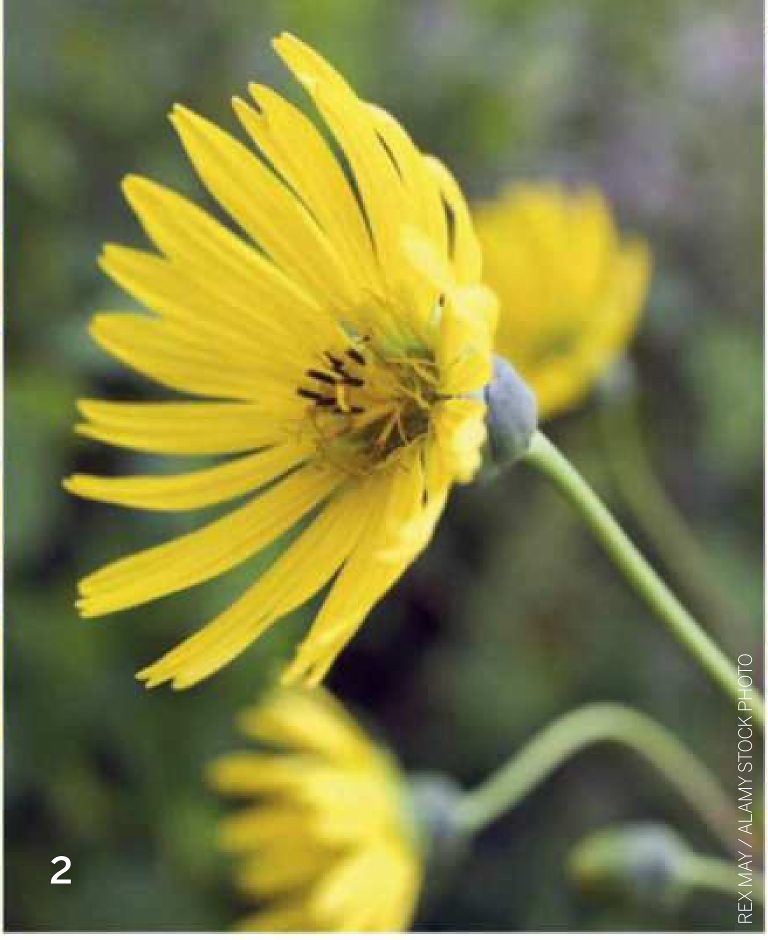
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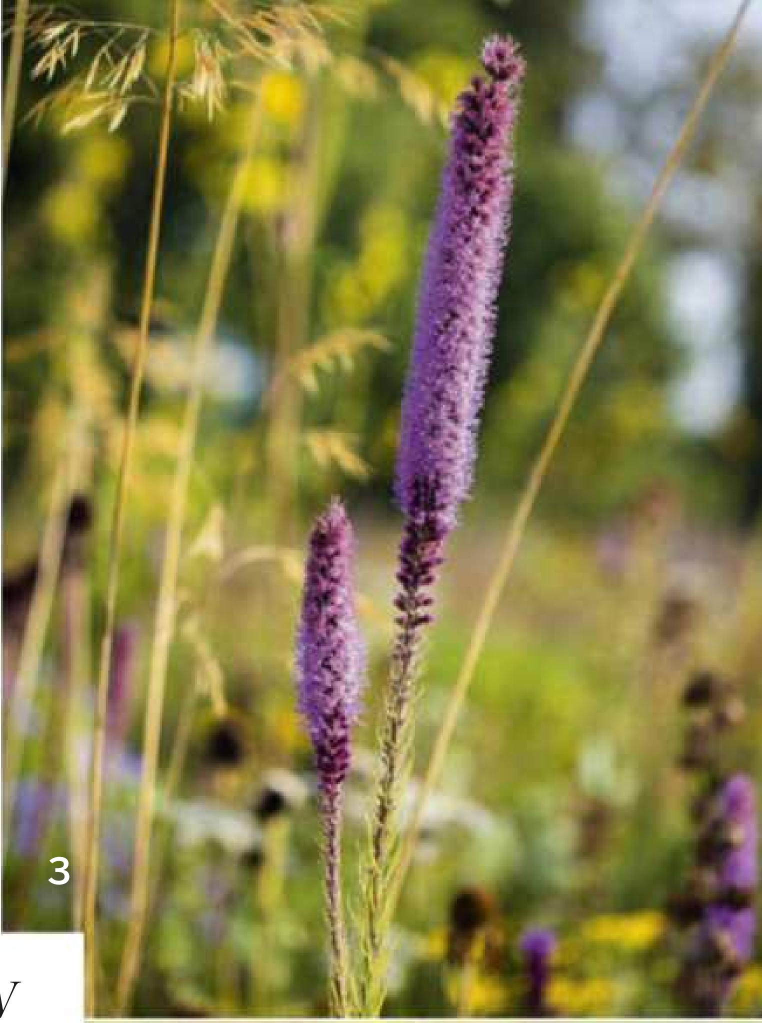
REX MAY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO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KEY PLANTS FROM THE MEADOW

1 *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *sullivantii* 'Goldsturm'
Dark-eyed, deep-yellow flowers up to 12cm across sit strong above dark-green leaves. Loves a sunny spot, not too dry, and will flower from August right through to October. 60cm. AGM*. RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b†.

2 *Silphium terebinthinaceum*
Prairie dock, is a towering beast with small, brilliant-yellow flowers and elephant ear-like leaves at the base. Needs space, but plants are very long lived and flowers last for over a month. 3m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

3 *Liatris pycnostachya*
One of the tallest *Liatris* species, with spikes of tightly bunched lavender flowers that bloom from the top down. Excellent cut flower. 1.2m. USDA 3a-9b.

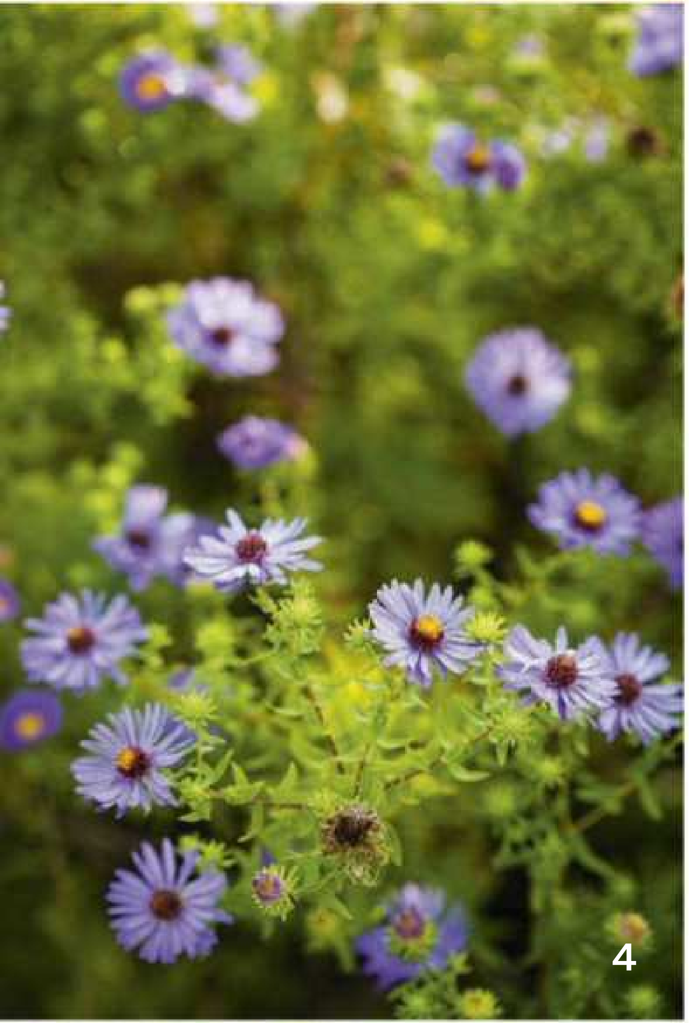
4 *Eurybia spectabilis*
Clouds of large, violet daisy flowers cluster at the tip of each stem. Prefers a hot site and sandy soil. 60cm.

5 *Echinacea purpurea* 'Prairie Splendor'
Much loved for its rose-magenta rays against an orange centre cone. Sits proud throughout the summer atop stiff stems clad with coarse, dark-green leaves. 60cm. USDA 3a-8b.

6 *Oenothera macrocarpa* subsp. *fremontii* 'Silver Wings'
Low-growing, with grey-blue lanceolate leaves and large, solitary lemon-yellow blooms. Flowers from early summer to autumn. 15cm.

7 *Eryngium yuccifolium*
Round, prickly heads covered in soft green flowers that eventually bleach white. A great upright for dry spots. 1.5m. RHS H4, USDA 3a-9b.

8 *Penstemon pinifolius*
A tiny, tough, drought-resistant shrub with a profusion of bright-scarlet flowers that sit tidily atop pine-like leaves. Perfect for accenting larger perennials. 20cm. AGM. RHS H4.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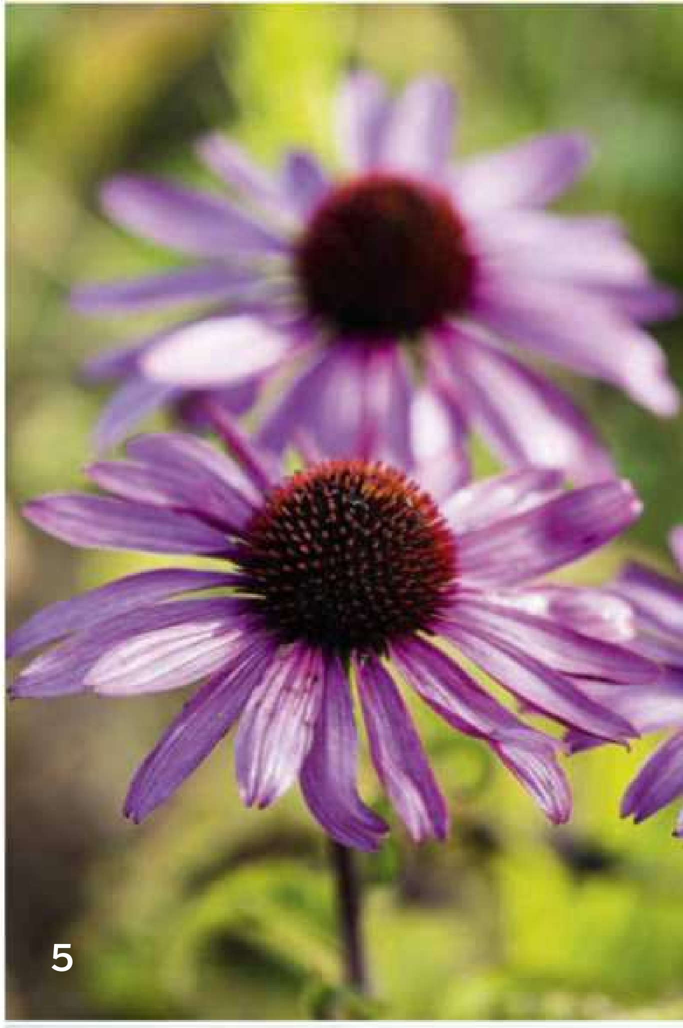
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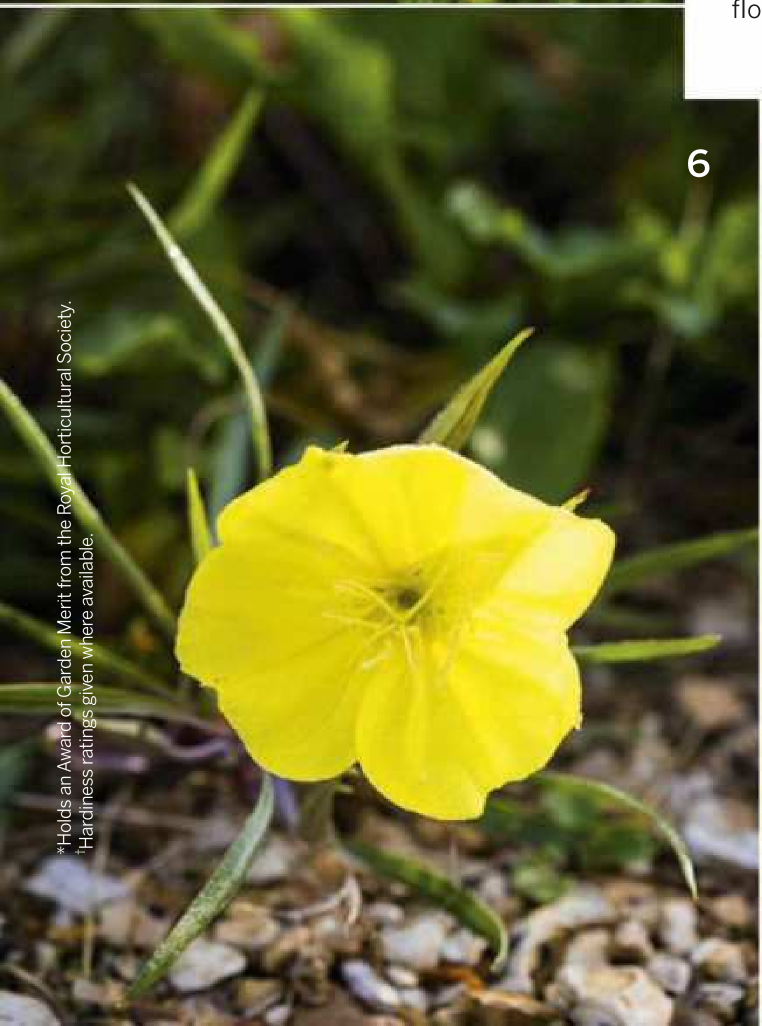
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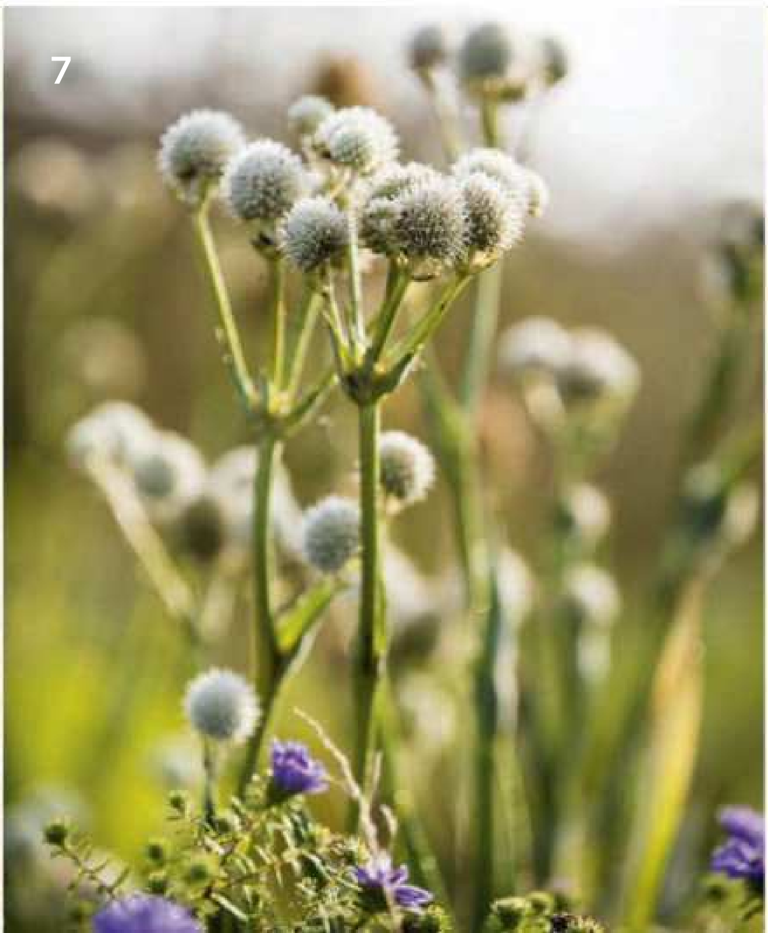
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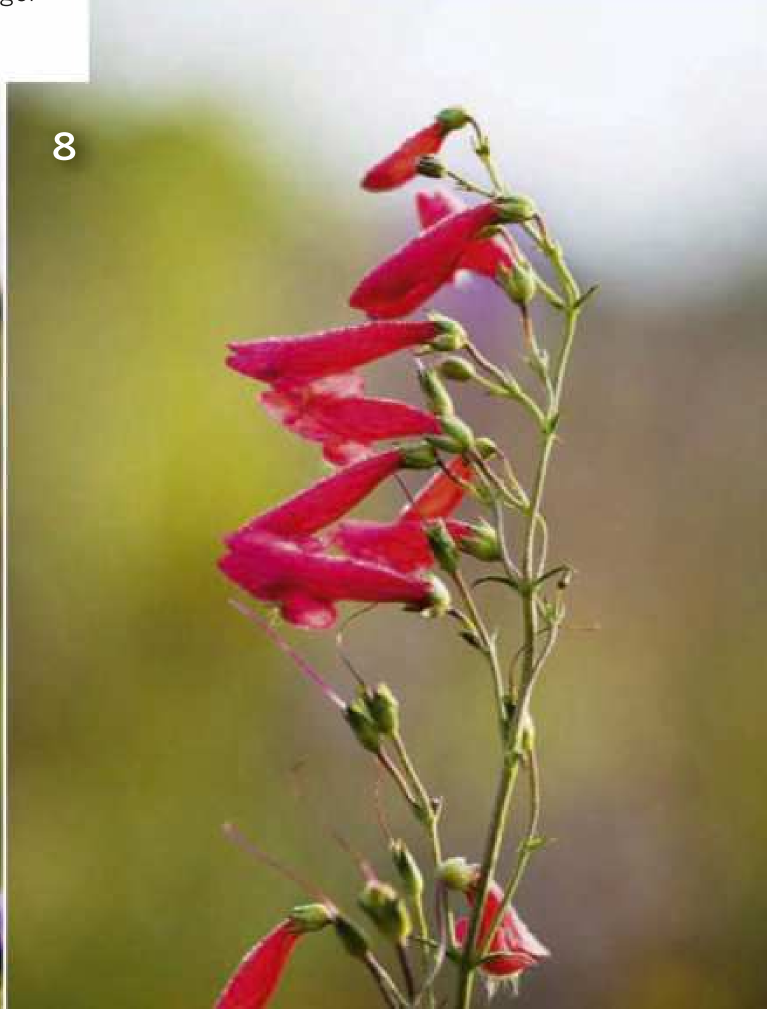
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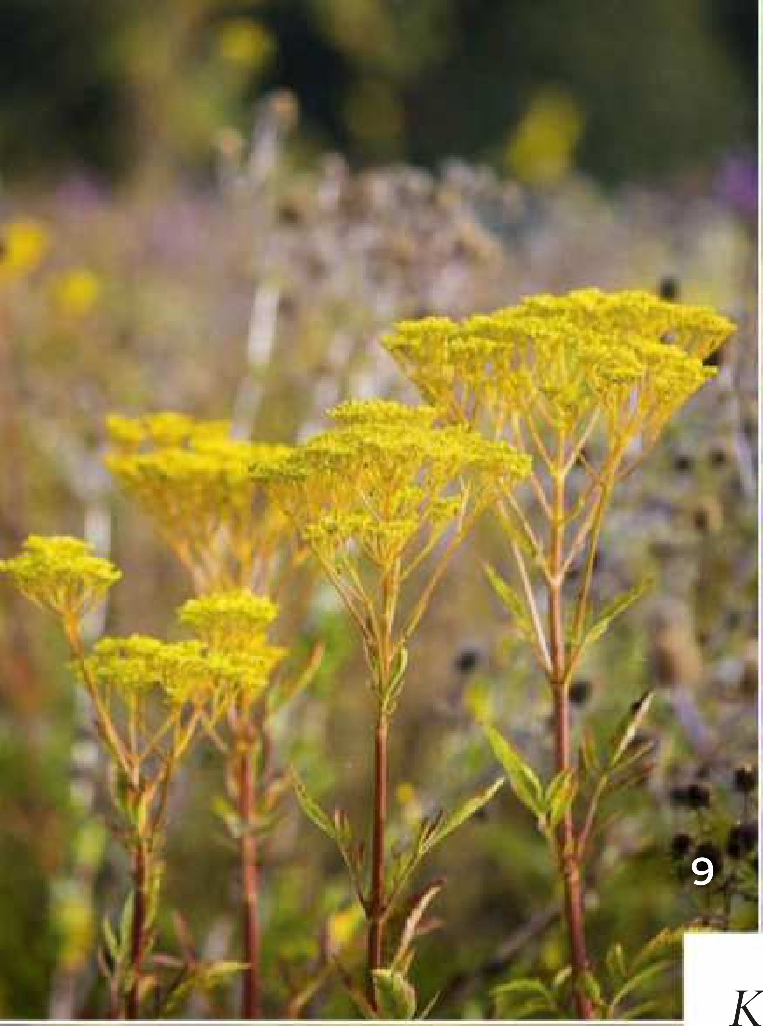
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.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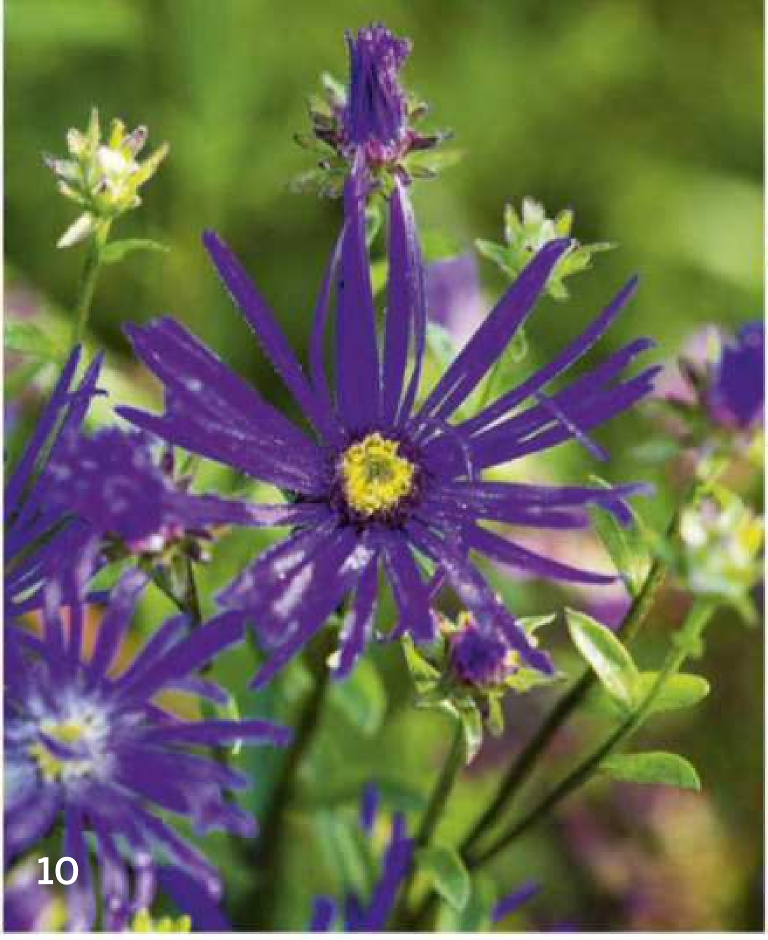
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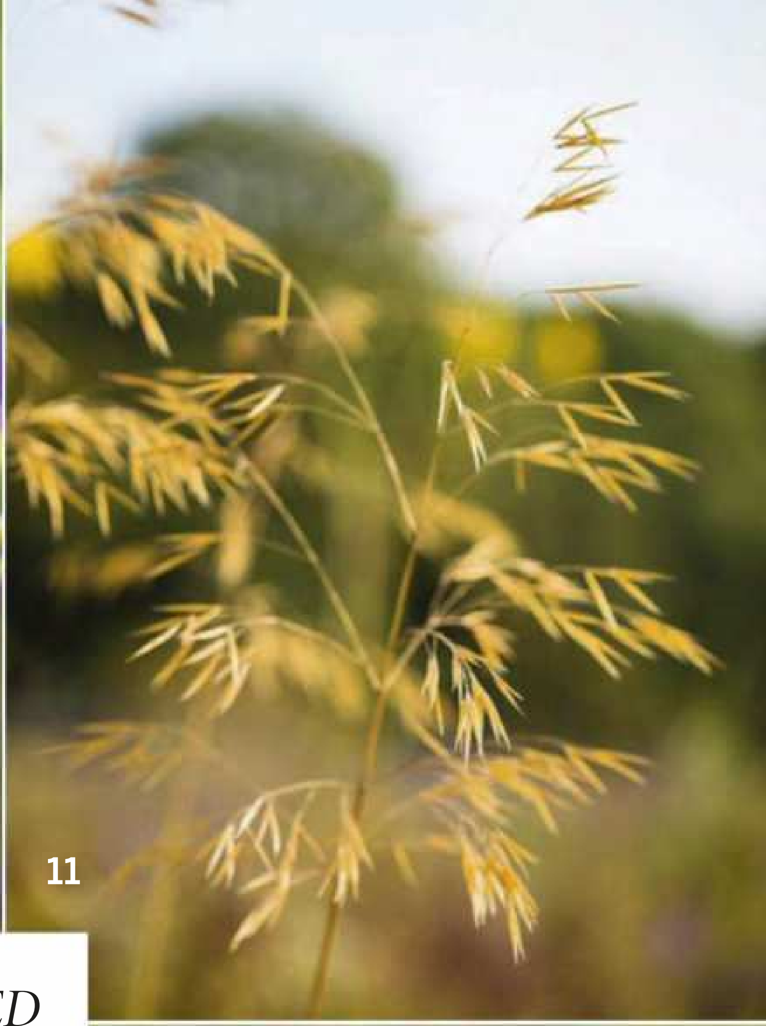
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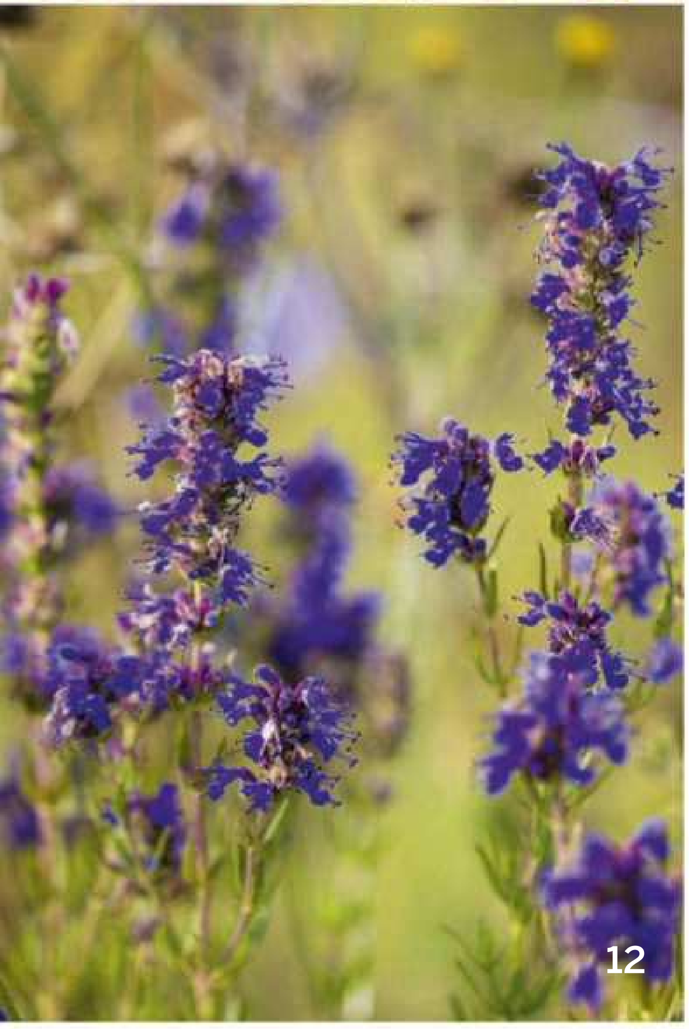
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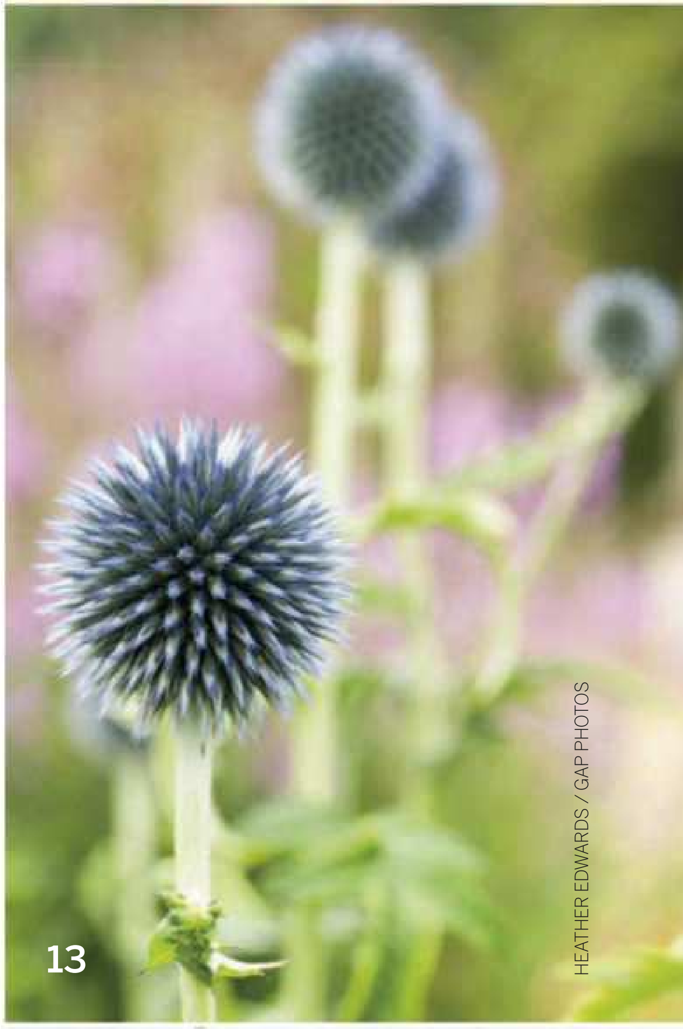
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HEATHER EDWARDS / GAP PHOTOS

KEY MEADOW PLANTS CONTINUED

9 *Patrinia scabiosifolia*
Golden valerian has erect stems, with coarsely toothed leaves that turn orange-red in autumn and many-flowered umbels of golden-yellow flowers. 1m. RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

10 *Aster amellus* 'Veilchenkönigin'
An old cultivar with stiff, dark stems and intense violet flowers from September to October. 40cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

11 *Stipa gigantea*
Tall stems of robust, oat-like flowers glint and shimmer in the late, slanting light of summer. A long-lasting feature that flowers throughout the summer. 2m. AGM. RHS H4.

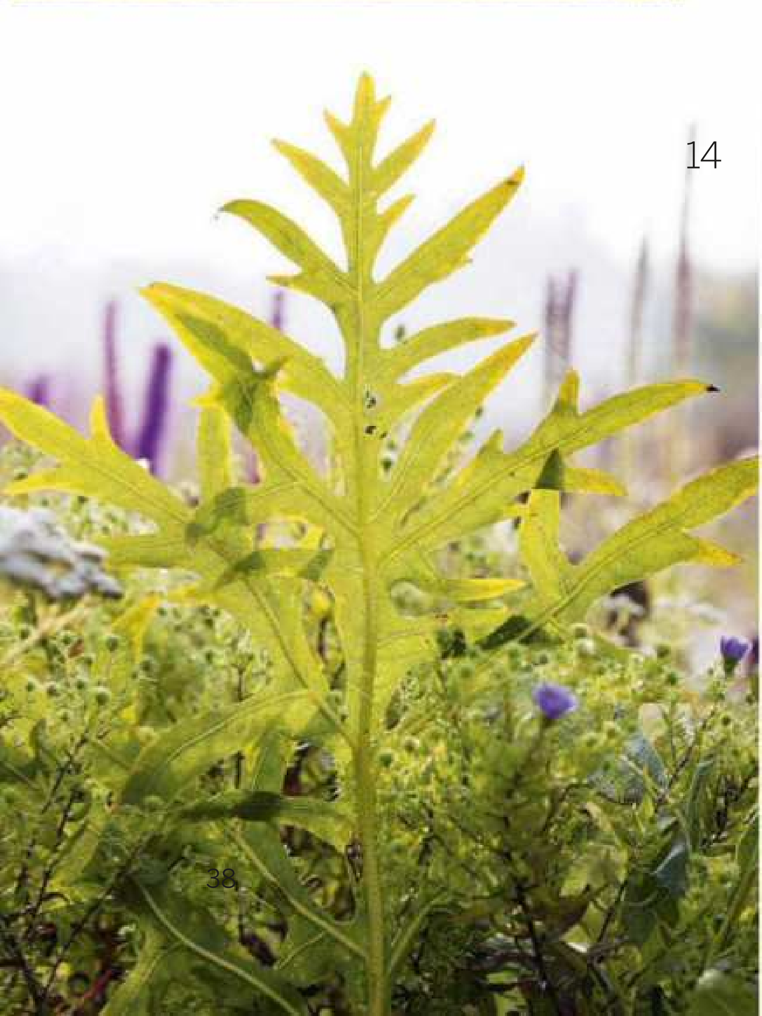
12 *Hyssopus officinalis* subsp. *aristatus*
Pretty, deep-blue flower spikes from midsummer to early autumn, with a heavenly scent. Seedheads look great over winter. 30cm.

13 *Echinops ritro*
The great globe thistle makes a strong plant even in the poorest of soil, so is perfect for meadow planting. Tall grey stems carry steel-blue flowers in late summer. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

14 *Silphium laciniatum*
Iconic prairie plant with bright-yellow, sunflower-like flowers and leaves that tend to orient themselves on a north-south axis. A perfect plant for future proofing, it can live for up to 80 years. 3m. RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

15 *Echinacea pallida*
This coneflower has distinct, pale-pink flowers with linear, reflexed rays that droop from a tall, brown cone. 1.2m. RHS H5, USDA 3a-10b.

16 *Perovskia atriplicifolia*
Russian sage, with its bleached white stems and grey-green leaves, is covered in late summer and early autumn with a dusting of tiny blue flowers. Indestructible and unfussy. 1.2m. RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.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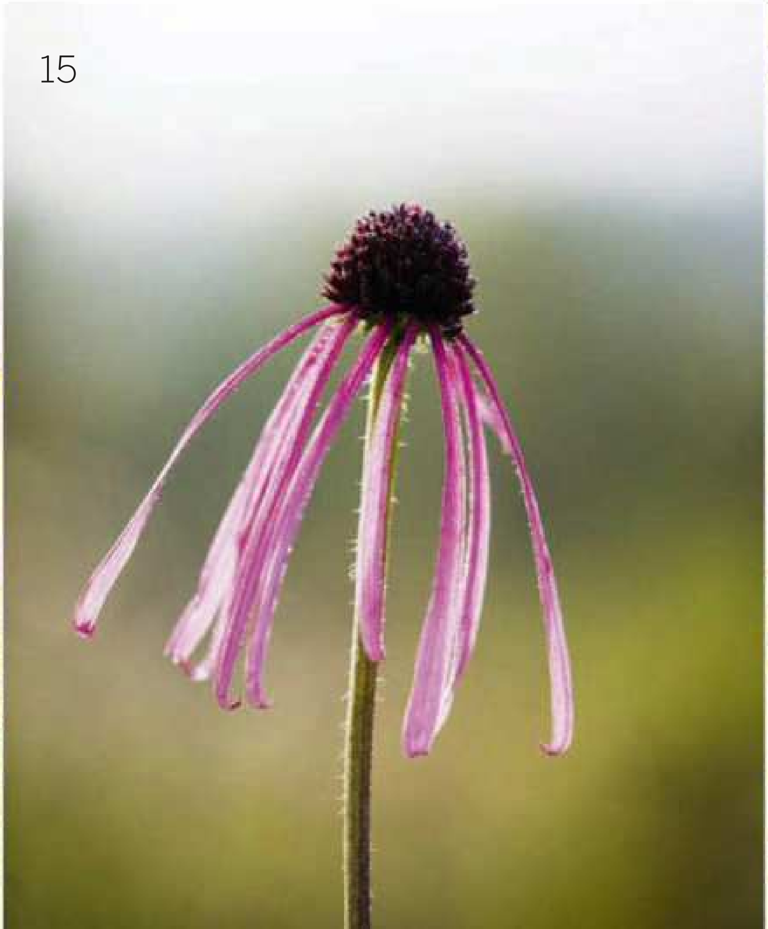
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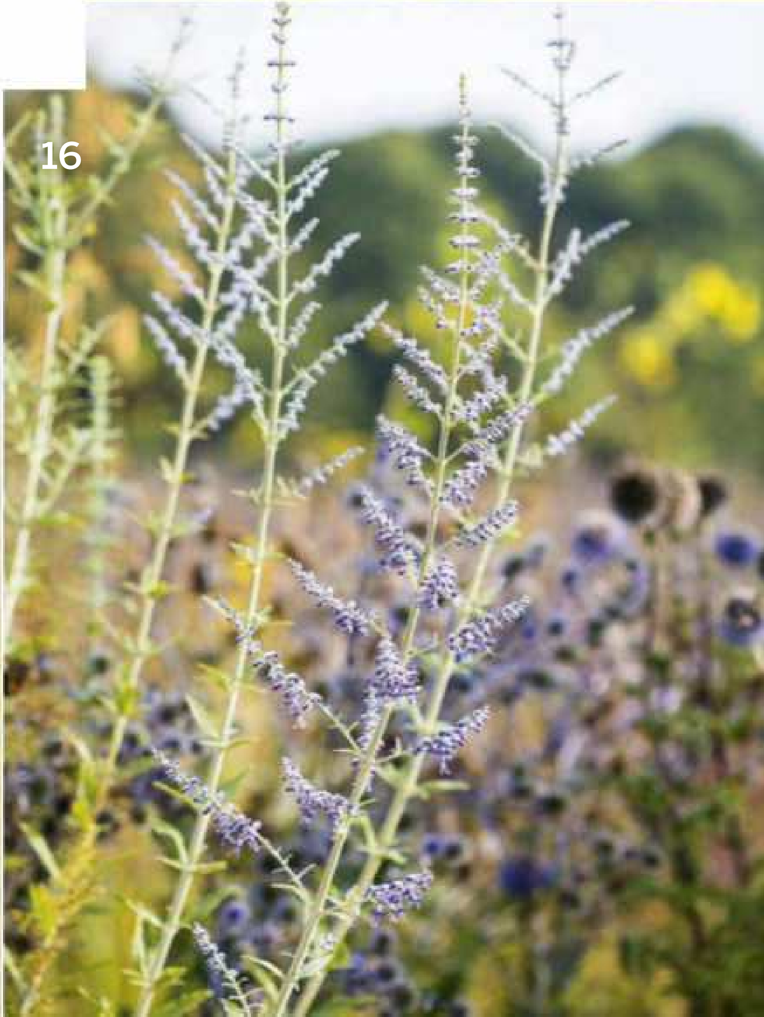
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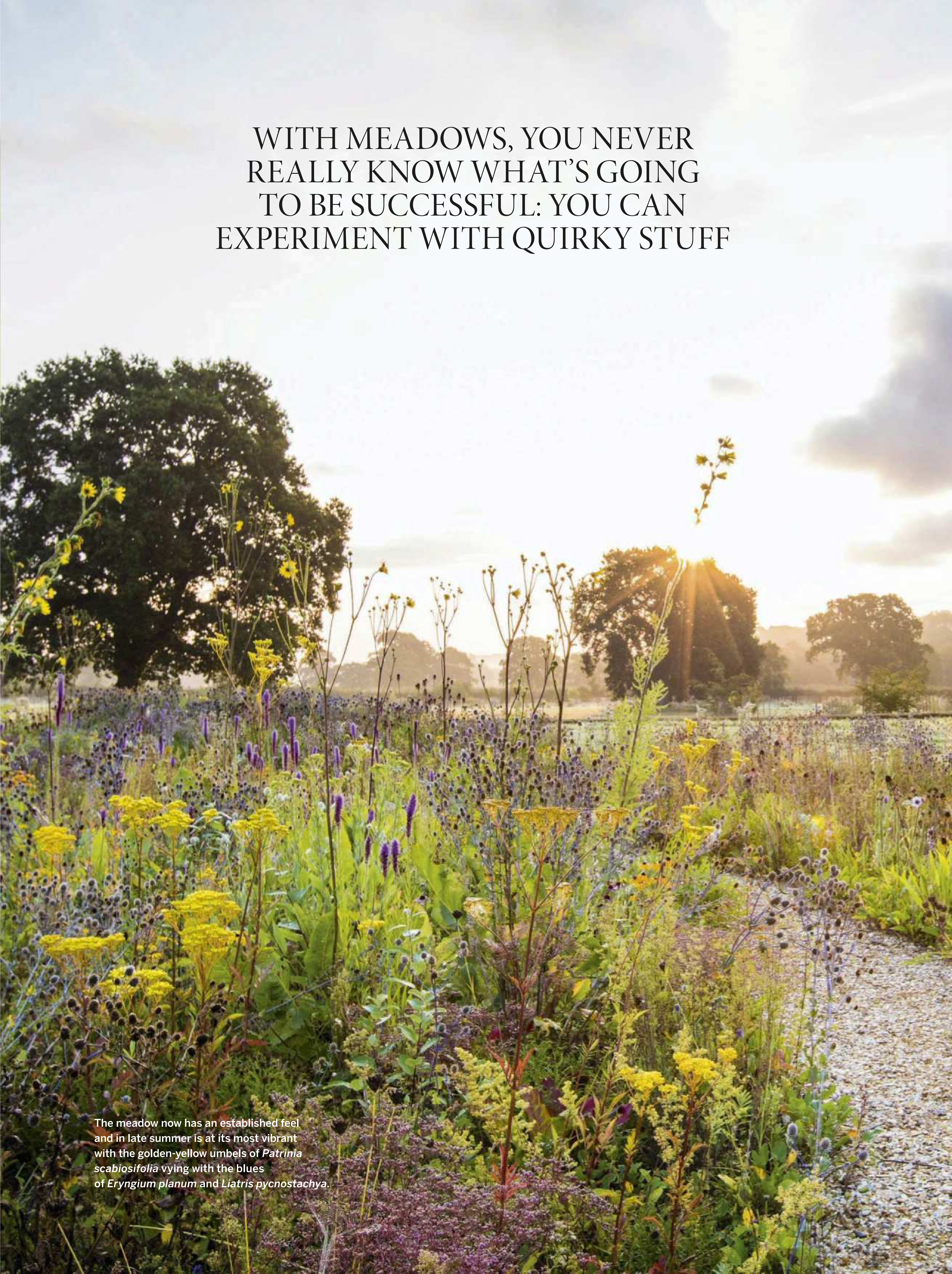
WITH MEADOWS, YOU NEVER REALLY KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO BE SUCCESSFUL: YOU CAN EXPERIMENT WITH QUIRKY STUFF



The meadow now has an established feel and in late summer is at its most vibrant with the golden-yellow umbels of *Patrinia scabiosifolia* vying with the blues of *Eryngium planum* and *Liatris pycnostachya*.

Future proof

If only we could know what the future weather patterns might be. What we can say with certainty is that our climate is changing, and a future-proof garden should not keep all its eggs in one basket. Diversity is key to a healthy ecosystem, so meadow plantings with their extensive range of species and cultivars make sense; not everything will survive, but much will thrive. Varied plantings also support diverse wildlife, and no garden will survive in the future without a wide supporting cast of insects and birds.

Perhaps the most exciting element of the modern meadow is seeing it grow and evolve from such tiny beginnings. Sowing by seed means that plants adjust to specific local conditions, with future generations of seed developing landrace adaptations. It's also efficient: seed is cheap to transport, uses little packaging and requires minimal watering and feeding to get established (although seedlings may need more moisture in the early stages).

▷ was covered with sand and sown. The sand is necessary to lower the nutrient levels so that weeds don't out-compete the perennials.

It was also necessary to water the area a lot at the beginning. But now that the meadow has started to establish itself, maintenance is pretty routine: a certain amount of weeding in spring, and then the meadow is allowed to stand until after Christmas when it is cut to just above ground level with a hedge trimmer and the brush cleared off. Most of the seed has naturally fallen by then and other than keeping the rabbits at bay – with a rabbit-height electric fence from October to late spring when they do the most damage – little else has to be done.

However, it's not just the meadow that is filled with unusual finds. The rest of the garden and the arboretum brim with choice plants, wild-collected species and little-known gems. David acknowledges Nick Macer from Pan Global Plants as a huge influence on both the choice of plants and the design of the garden and arboretum. "Nick is immensely knowledgeable, and has a good eye for what makes a successful garden plant. He's taught me a lot of about scale." It's knowledge that has clearly been put to good use. ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION
Address Wudston House, High Street, Wedhampton, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 3QE. **Tel** 01380 840965. **Open** By appointment only until 30 September. Admission £10 for NGS, **ngs.org.uk**

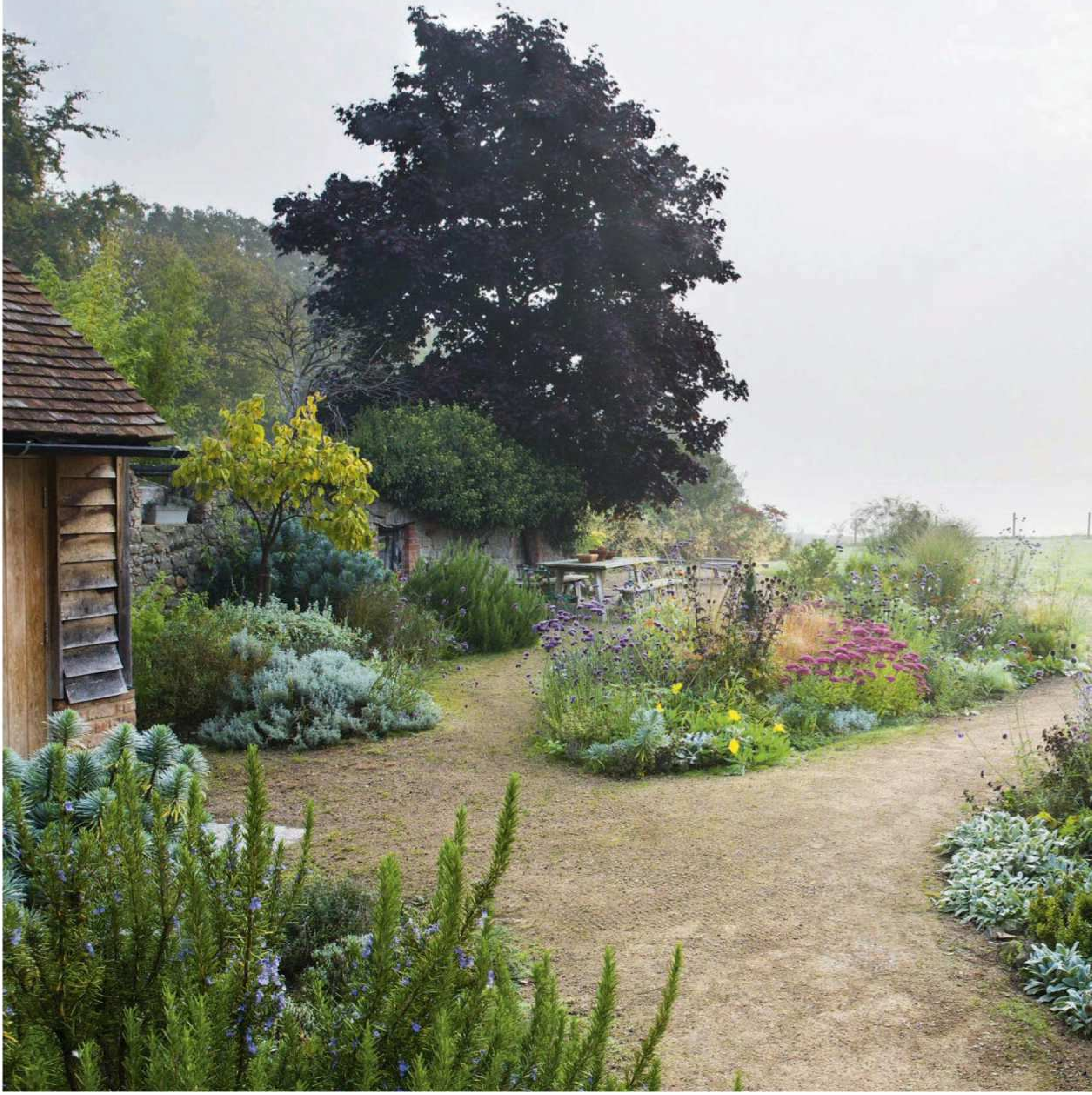
Right Nurseryman Nick Macer of Pan Global Plants helped choose some of the plants for this autumnal long border where *Crocosmia* x *crocosmiiflora* 'Harlequin', surrounded by tall *Eryngium pandanifolium* and foliage of *Hedychium* 'Helen Dillon', blazes a brilliant orange on one side of the gravel path, with the softer, hazier hues of *Eupatorium maculatum* 'Orchard Dene' and tall steely blue globes of *Echinops sphaerocephalus* facing it on the other.

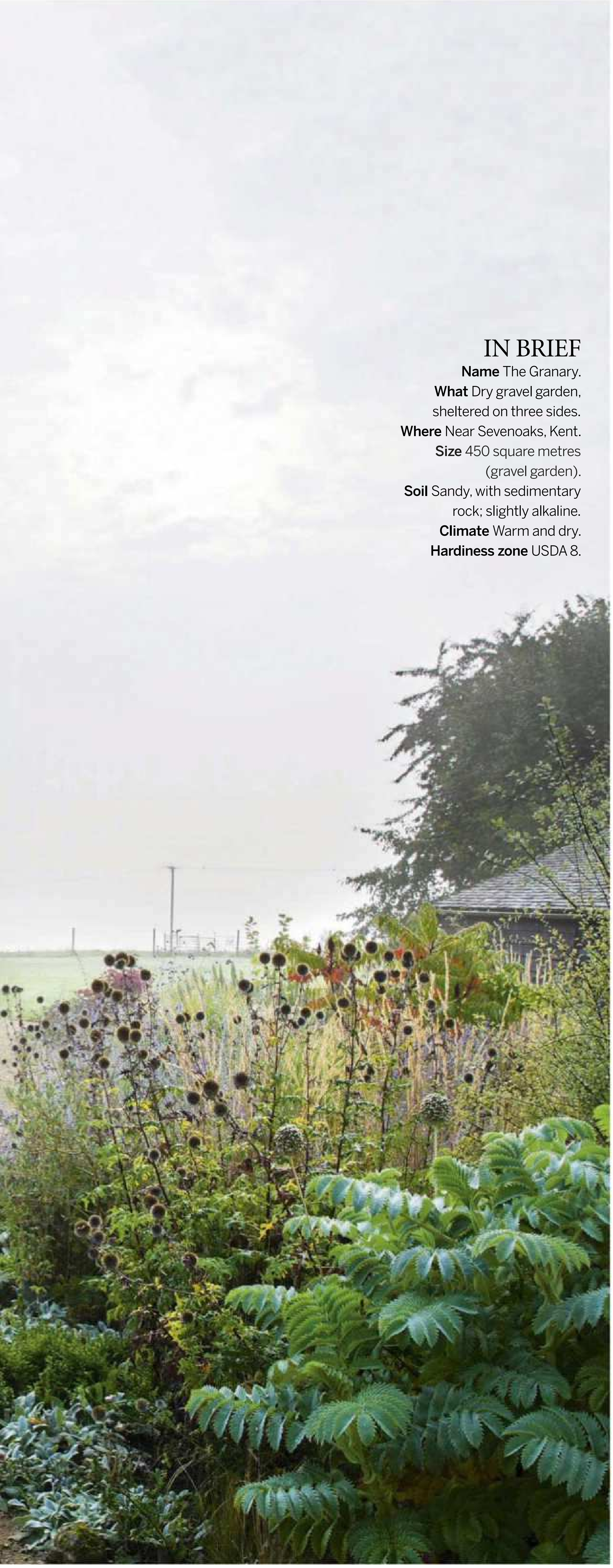
THE REST OF THE GARDEN AND THE ARBORETUM BRIM WITH CHOICE PLANTS, WILD-COLLECTED SPECIES AND LITTLE-KNOWN GEMS

SUNNY SIDE UP

Drought-resistant, sun-loving plants bring a hint of the Mediterranean to a hot, dry corner of Kent

WORDS **KENDRA WILSON** PHOTOGRAPHS **RACHEL WARNE**





IN BRIEF

Name The Granary.
What Dry gravel garden, sheltered on three sides.
Where Near Sevenoaks, Kent.
Size 450 square metres (gravel garden).
Soil Sandy, with sedimentary rock; slightly alkaline.
Climate Warm and dry.
Hardiness zone USDA 8.

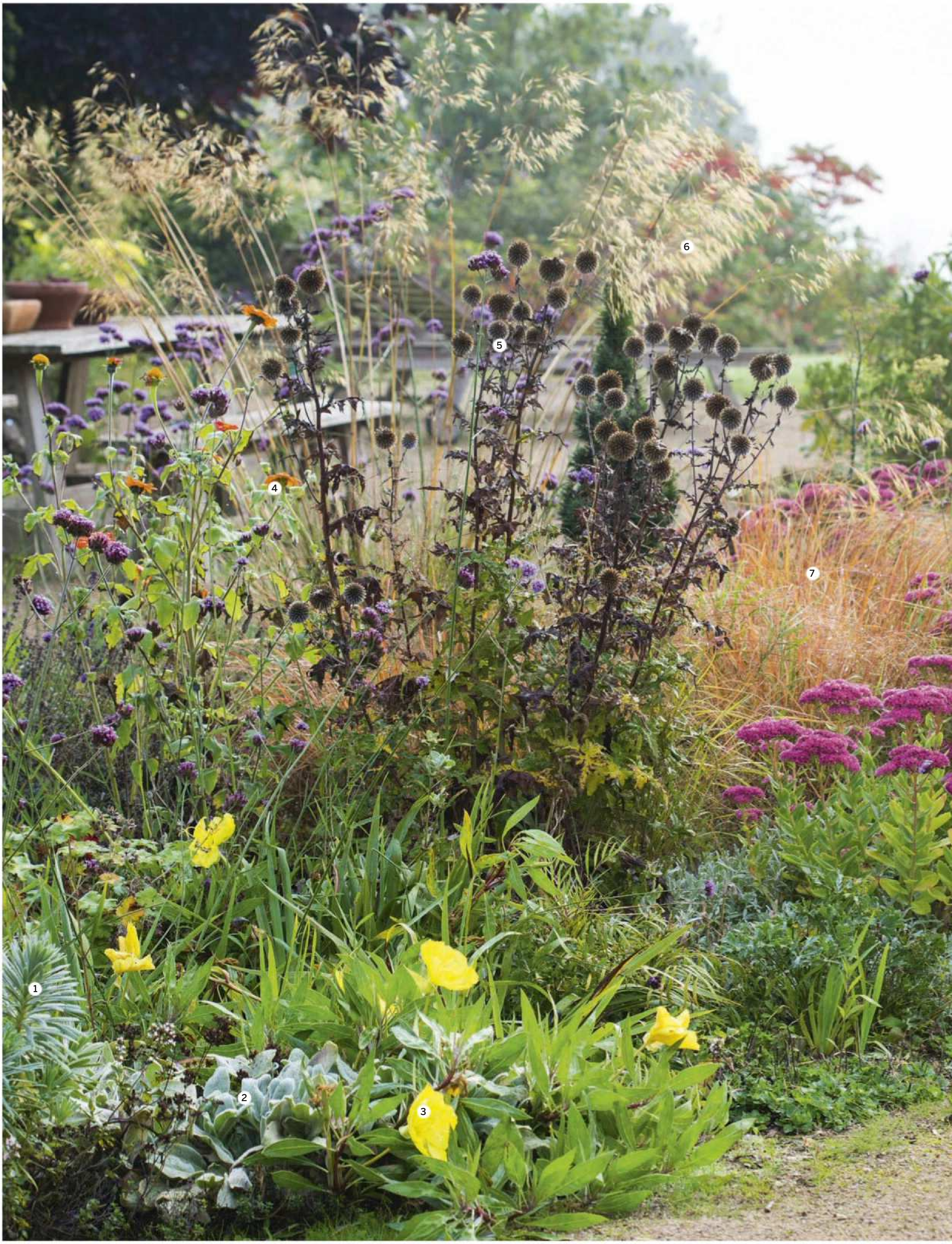
When somebody compliments your garden it can come as something of a shock – that is, if you are the type of person who looks out of the window only to see a list of chores. Alex Mitchell, gardens editor of the *London Evening Standard*, doesn't have this problem, not because she's immodest but because she is completely absorbed by all the good things about her garden. "When my mother says that I really must get on top of the weeds," says Alex, "I'm thinking: what weeds? I'm not seeing any."

Alex's mother lives next door, in the house where Alex grew up in Kent. Her own house is a converted farm building, her garden a former yard, encased in concrete for as long as anyone can remember. It was a useful place to ride a bike amid the machinery; now Alex's two boys dodge flowerbeds as they cycle around.

Being a former farmyard, the garden is enclosed by buildings and walls on three sides, while it is entirely exposed on the eastern side to an uninterrupted view of fields and woods. The garden is on a plateau, dropping away like a giant ha-ha before the farm flows out seamlessly towards the horizon. Or rather, this was the case before a simple wire fence was installed, to separate Alex's sheep from her plants. The fence has had the unexpected bonus of bringing a more human scale to the garden. "We learned that it was better to have something more enclosed," says Alex. "Before, it felt as though you were dropping off the edge of the world."

Alex was never tempted to make a classic English garden, here in the county known as the Garden of England. Rolling topography is referenced in the curves that she mapped out with a pencil and paper, creating flowerbeds and generous paths of Breedon gravel, with no grass in the foreground at ▷

Left The east-facing garden looks out over the big open skies of Kent. A Breedon gravel path winds around curved beds that are filled with texture and subtle shades of green from *Melianthus major*, *Rosmarinus officinalis* and *Stachys byzantina* 'Silver Carpet'.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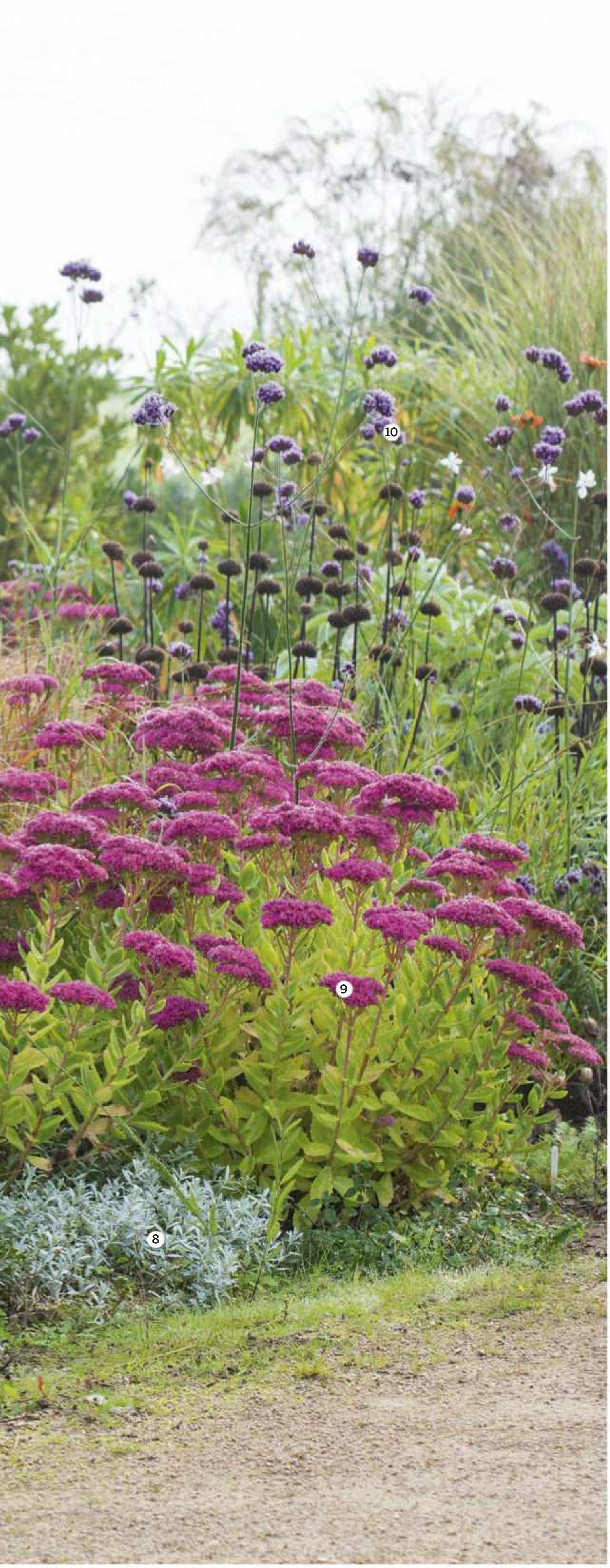


INSTEAD OF GREEN FORMALITY, THERE ARE FLOWERBEDS AND GENEROUS PATHS

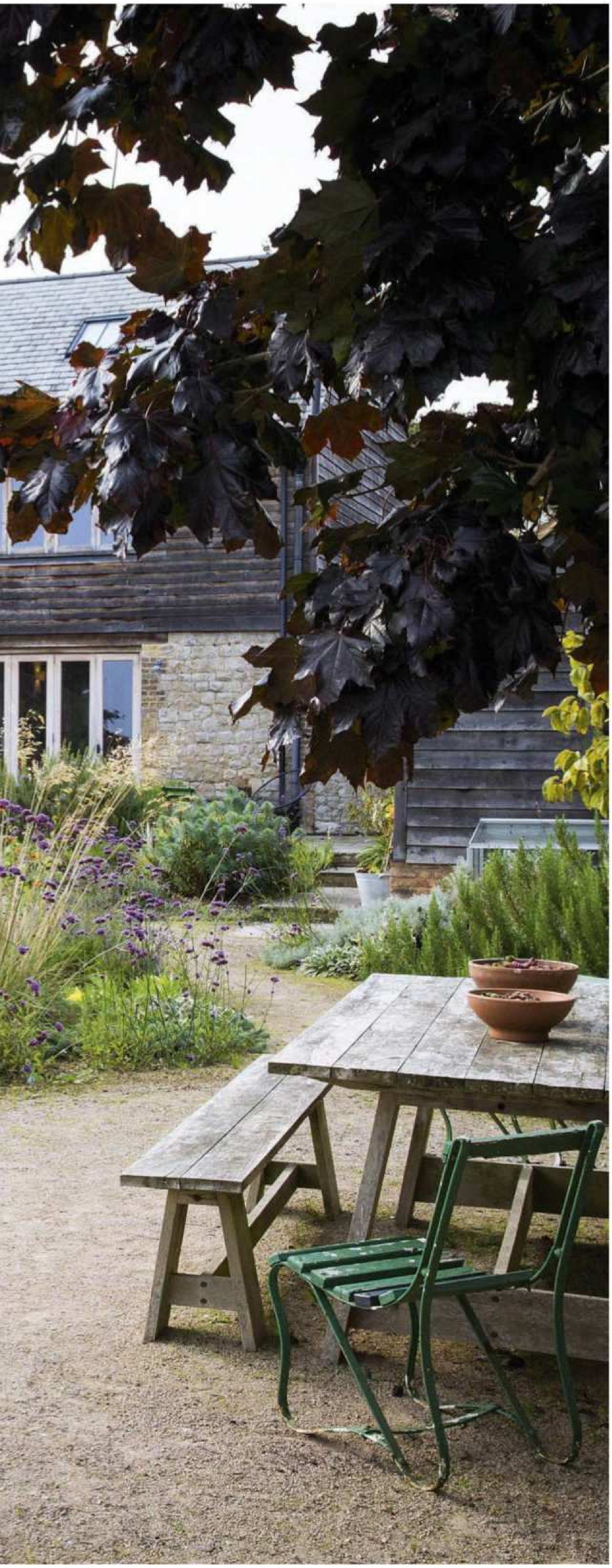
▷ all. Instead of green formality, she has made a dry garden that is more obviously connected with its farmyard origins and with Alex's own history.

Besides being a fruit farmer's daughter from Kent, she has a primal affinity for a hot climate, connected with her mother."We spent a lot of time as kids in Chile because my mum grew up there," says Alex. "My grandparents had a garden by the coast which I loved playing in." When her cousins visited, they pointed out that she'd made a Chilean garden. When Alex looked through old photos of her grandparents' house, she recognised the beaten earth paths, edged with rocks. "I had unconsciously tried to recreate a place where I'd felt very happy as a child."

She has been influenced by Beth Chatto's garden as well, which is only slightly further north from Alex's, on the sunny side of England. It would have been madness not to have taken inspiration from the seminal drought garden in Essex, given its similarly unpromising beginnings as a car park, with soil that was not only compacted but low-grade. "My soil is made up of chert, a sedimentary mix of flint and clay," explains Alex. ▷

SHAPELY BORDERS

When Alex planned her garden, she was influenced by the shapes of fields and woodland in the distance: "They're quite curvy," she explains. "And I thought that the curve of the garden might work with them." She realised after initial planting that she needed to add evergreen structure, a kind of central spine, since many of the plants fire their seeds out into the path, and has included a series of fastigiate yews that will grow into shaggily tall, dark verticals. Leaf shapes and long-lasting colour come to the fore in this drought garden, as well as the direction of trunks and stems. The, bulky, evergreen *Euphorbia characias* subsp. *wulfenii* (**1**) "loves this garden". *Stachys byzantina* 'Silver Carpet' (**2**) is well-named, forming a soft mat at the front of the border that stays in place in winter. Seasonal ground-level colour comes from *Oenothera macrocarpa* (**3**): "It sprawls around with massive lemon sherbet flowers that come out toward the end of the day," says Alex. *Tithonia rotundifolia* (**4**), adds a bolt of orange, as well as height, along with darkening seedheads of *Echinops ritro* (**5**) while tall and mid-height grasses *Stipa gigantea* (**6**) and *Stipa tenuissima* (**7**) look good throughout autumn and early winter. *Cerastium tomentosum* (**8**) is another weed-smothering silver mat and complements the bold pink *Hylotelephium spectabile* (**9**), which pulls in the bees along with wiry *Verbena bonariensis* (**10**).



NEW PLANTS ARE WATERED IN; THEN, BETH CHATTO-STYLE, THEY ARE LEFT TO FEND FOR THEMSELVES

▷ "Underground, you have a pan which feels like solid rock." Instead of black gold, she has stony sand.

After Alex and her wife Donna said goodbye to the builders, they discovered that only a meagre amount of topsoil had been spread on the outlined beds. "I started to dig and found that the ground was almost all subsoil," says Alex. There was also an astounding amount of brick, concrete and lime mortar. Her solution was to grow things that like those conditions: "And the things that like it really do like it."

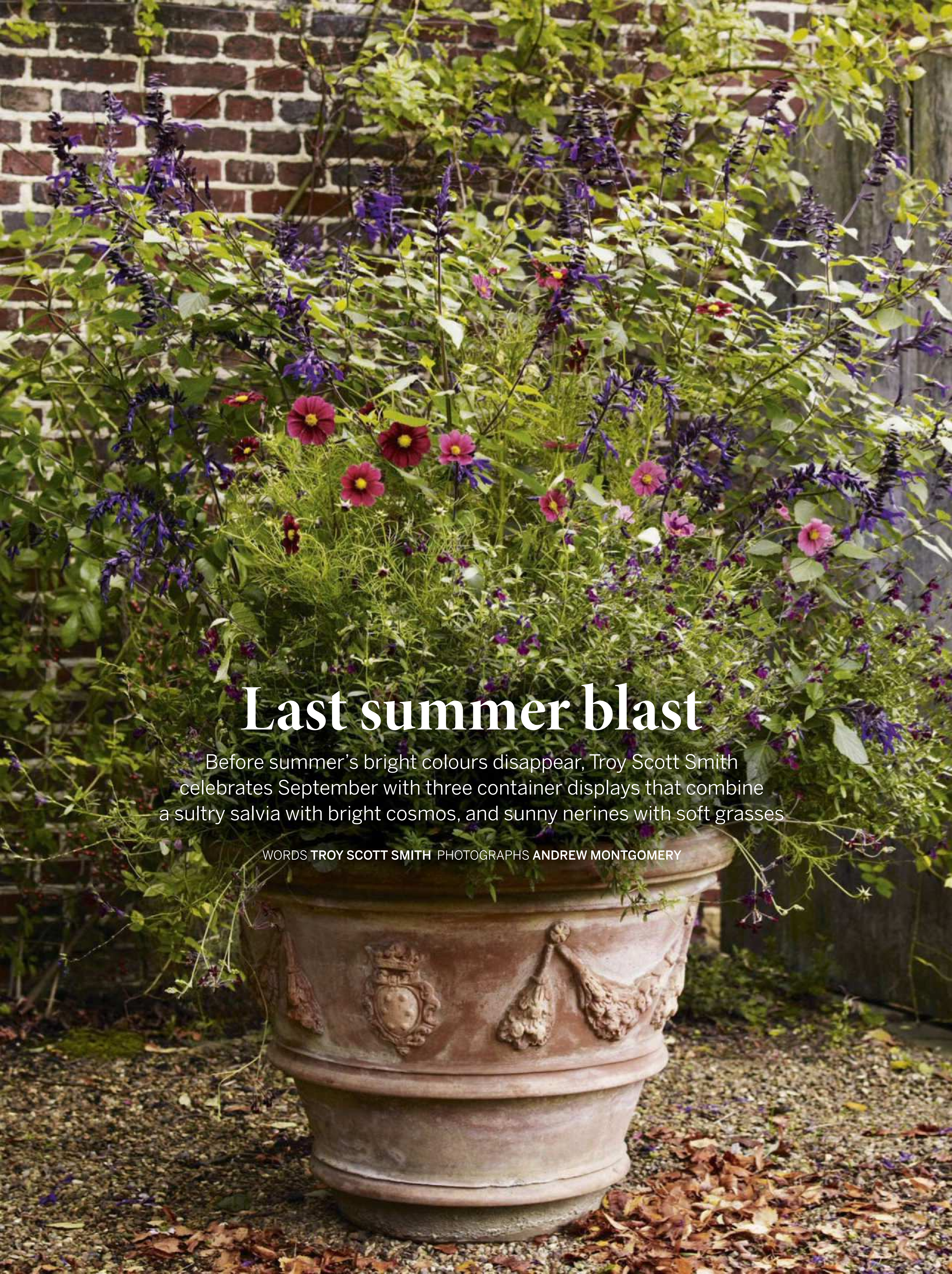
In the hottest, driest corner of the garden is a table where the family eats in the early evening. Out of reach of the hose stands a thriving mastic tree (*Pistacia lentiscus*), a familiar sight around the Mediterranean, along with the tough *Rosa rugosa*. *Stachys*, sedum and the glaucous, reptilian *Euphorbia myrsinites*, looking happiest when hot, hug the edges of the central bed. Drought-resistant foliage that is needle-like, silver, narrow or all three is joined by the vibrant *Melianthus major* and prostrate *Oenothera macrocarpa*.

Gravel being relentlessly attractive to self-seeding plants, *Verbascum bombyciferum* and *Verbena bonariensis* are constantly on the move, looking for maximum light and minimum company. Alex's ambition for the central bed is to create a fin-shaped profile, with vertical evergreens such as fastigiate yews combined with smaller trees such as *Rhus typhina* that will grow into interesting shapes.

Alex's blindness to failure is useful. "Loads of plants have died. I just leave those ones and move on." New plants are watered in; otherwise, Beth Chatto-style, they are left to fend for themselves, boosted by homemade compost.

"It doesn't feel as though I'm in England when I'm here," says Alex. Against a warm wall, a fig tree heavy with fruit is the perfect emblem for this garden. ◻

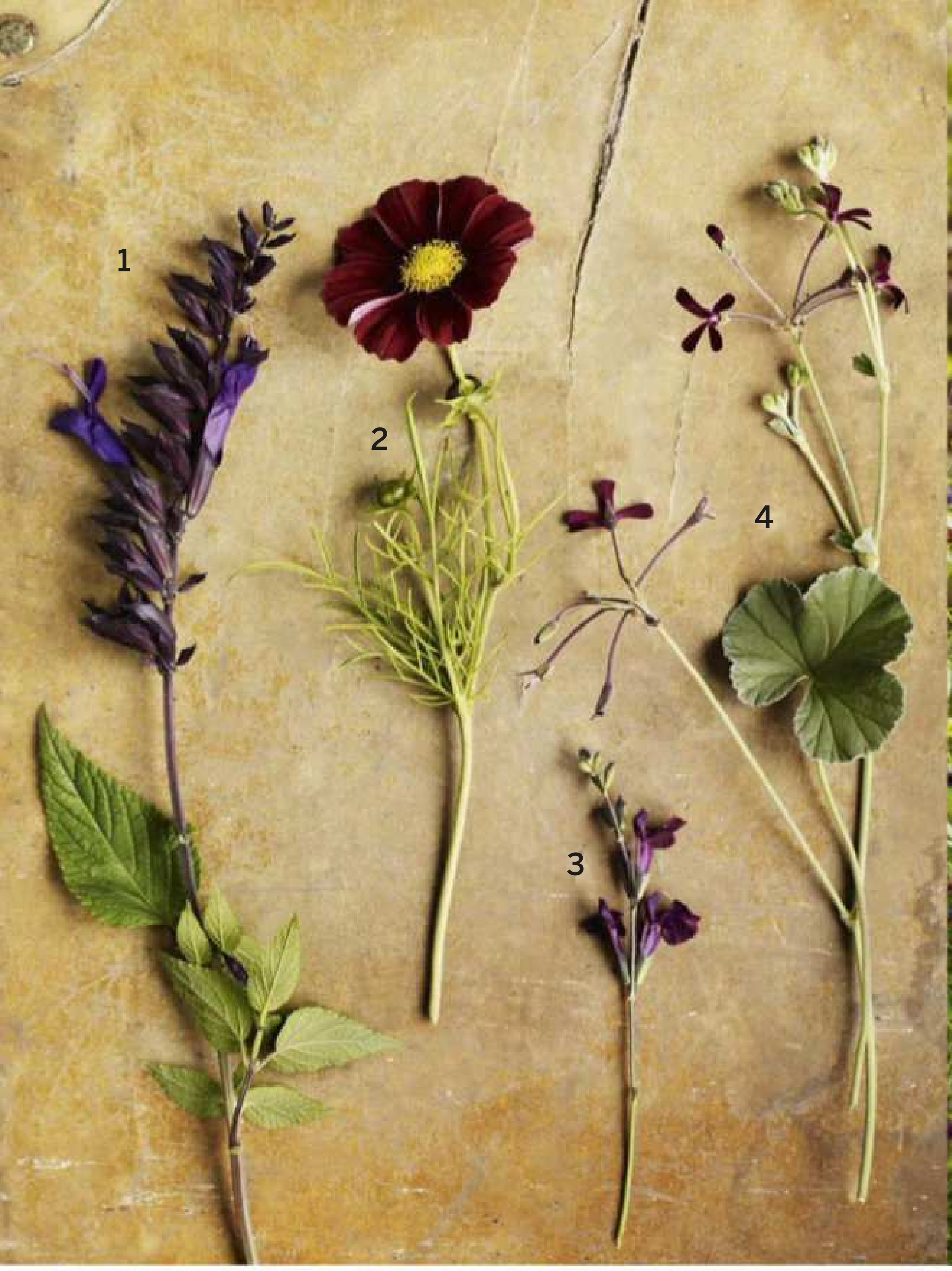
Left Beneath the shade of a dark-leaved maple, *Acer platanoides* 'Royal Red', a table and benches, made from untreated teak, look out on to Alex's carefully structured central border where compact forms of low-growing plants, such as the silver-leaved *Santolina chamaecyparissus*, contrast with the airy height provided by *Gaura lindheimeri* and *Anemanthele lessoniana*.



Last summer blast

Before summer's bright colours disappear, Troy Scott Smith celebrates September with three container displays that combine a sultry salvia with bright cosmos, and sunny nerines with soft grasses

WORDS **TROY SCOTT SMITH** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**



PLAY OF LIGHT AND COLOUR

This terracotta pot is one of several at Sissinghurst bought many years ago from a small pottery near Sienna. It sits in an intimate, enclosed area behind an over-sized, aged, oak door that leads from the potting shed yard into the rose garden, so it's one I pass several times a day. As this area is not generally open to visitors, I can relax and have fun with the display here, trying out plants and combinations with some interesting results.

How to achieve the look

My starting point was to create a display of sufficient volume and size to stand up for itself against the relative enormity of the wooden door and brick wall. At the same time, I wanted a display that was both generous with layers of depth and interest, and relaxed in its composition and plant choice. I deliberately didn't want to introduce complexity or sophistication; instead, I felt that a subtlety of contrast between the solidity of the wall and the diaphanous nature of the plants would be more compelling and satisfying.

When considering the composition of a particular display, I tend to think of layers of planting. In this arrangement, I engineered four layers that are both distinct yet also merge with their neighbour. From top to bottom, these are *Salvia* 'Amistad', *Cosmos bippinatus* 'Antiquity', *Salvia* 'Nachtvlinder' and finally *Pelargonium sidoides*. It is possible with this type of 'layer' planting to edit out one plant type completely – if, for example, it has gone over prematurely – and replace it with another plant type without disturbing the overall arrangement too much.

What I also like about the finished display is the dazzling effect it gives, like lights being switched on and off inside a house. You have the sparkle of the cosmos in shades of saturated crimson contrasting with the melancholic purple-plum colours of the Salvia 'Nachtvlinder' and pelargonium, and then the light-catching explosion of *Salvia* 'Amistad'. This display is long lasting with minimal effort; just ensure you regularly deadhead the cosmos.

Plants

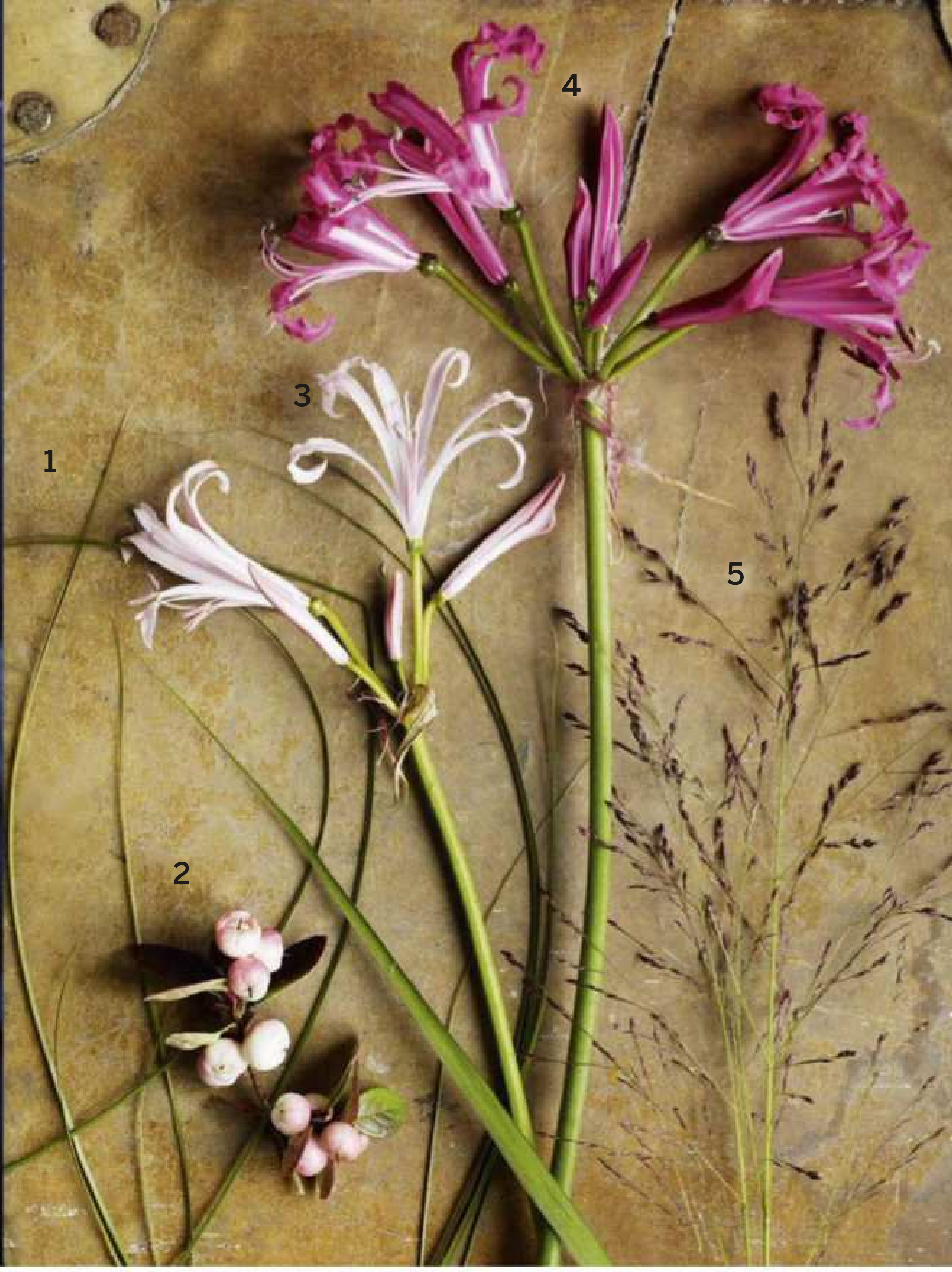
1 *Salvia* 'Amistad'
An easy-to-grow *Salvia* that flowers from May to October from a spring sowing. 1.2m. AGM*. RHS H3†.

2 *Cosmos bipinnatus* 'Antiquity'
Flowers open a rich crimson and fade to antique bronze-salmon with age. 45cm. RHS H3.

3 *Salvia* 'Nachtvlinder'
A shrubby perennial from the Dutch nursery De Hessenhof. Maroon flowers, at their best in June, continue into October with minimal deadheading. 75cm. AGM. RHS H5.

4 *Pelargonium sidoides*
Abundant crimson-black flowers contrast with silver foliage. 25cm. AGM. RHS H1C.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.



GOOD COMPANIONS

This unused doorway provides me with an ideal place to pop a few plants down where they can be enjoyed closer to both nose and eye level. The overall grouping is not so important, it is more about the individuals, that might otherwise languish in flower in the nursery, unseen and unappreciated. Here I have used a few spare grasses and pots of *Gaultheria* to show off the gloriously flamboyant nerines.

How to achieve the look

Pots are so useful for placing plants in places where they would not normally be happy. In this south-facing doorway I have used pots of nerines with grasses and gaultheria, none of which would be natural bedfellows of the nerines. However because the pots are temporary and will be moved when 'over', it doesn't necessarily matter if the plants are not entirely suited to the conditions, for the few weeks they are here they will be more than content.

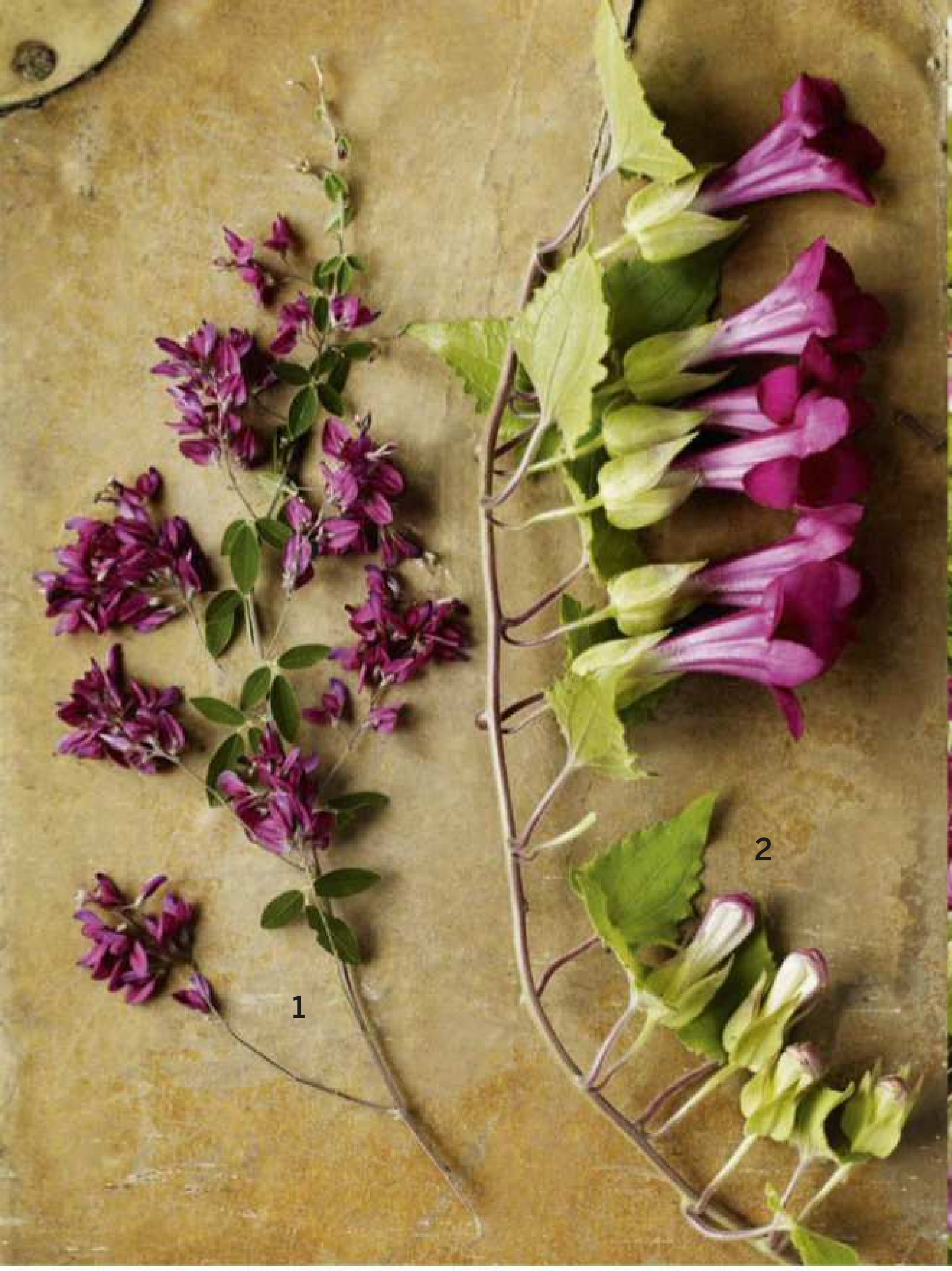
Nerines hail from the Drakensberg Mountains in South Africa and many species are not hardy, but cultivars from *N. bowdenii* can reliably withstand temperatures down to -15°C. I have chosen to use two *N. bowdenii* cultivars – 'Nikita', which I like for its subtle colouring, the bright, tangy pink 'Isabel' – that contrast nicely with each other.

The bulbs should be planted – whether in open ground or in pots – so their necks and shoulders are above soil level. If the bulbs are planted any deeper flowering can be delayed a year. Like many of these South African bulbs, once settled the bulbs shouldn't be disturbed and seem to enjoy a degree of over-crowding.

From late summer loose umbels with up to ten flowers with wavy re-curved petals appear on erect leafless stems and last for many weeks. The flowers also offer a faint musky scent, so consider placing the pots where the fragrance can be appreciated. Strappy foliage appears once the flowers fade and persists through winter.

Plants

1 *Carex testacea*
Although this ornamental grass will take some shade, it colours up best in full sun. 1.5m. RHS H5.
2 *Gaultheria* 'Pearls'
Pale berries from late autumn through winter. 50cm. RHS H5.
3 *Nerine bowdenii* 'Nikita'
Its subtle, soft pink contrasts nicely with the straight species. 60cm.
4 *Nerine bowdenii* 'Isabel'
Happiest in a sunny position and needs a well-drained soil. 50cm. RHS H5.
5 *Panicum virgatum* 'Shenandoah'
Prefers full sun or part shade, but can tend to flop in too much shade. 90cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.



FOUNTAIN OF COLOUR

Lespedeza thunbergii is one of the best autumn-flowering shrubs and is a plant I have loved for many years. Its long stems and pea-like flowers that have a very similar look to wisteria, are perfect for trailing down a wall, and look wonderful when paired with the climbing perennial *Lophospermum erubescens.* Both prefer full sun, which should rule out this north-facing wall, but the temporary nature of this container display gives me more leeway.

How to achieve the look

At Sissinghurst we are lucky to have these wonderful old brick walls, which are remnants of an Elizabethan mansion that once stood on the site. Vita made sunken troughs by lining the excavated sills of the wall's bricked-in windows with slate both on the bottom and the sides. In the bottom slates she drilled holes to aid drainage and sealed the joints to ensure not too much water or soil escaped.

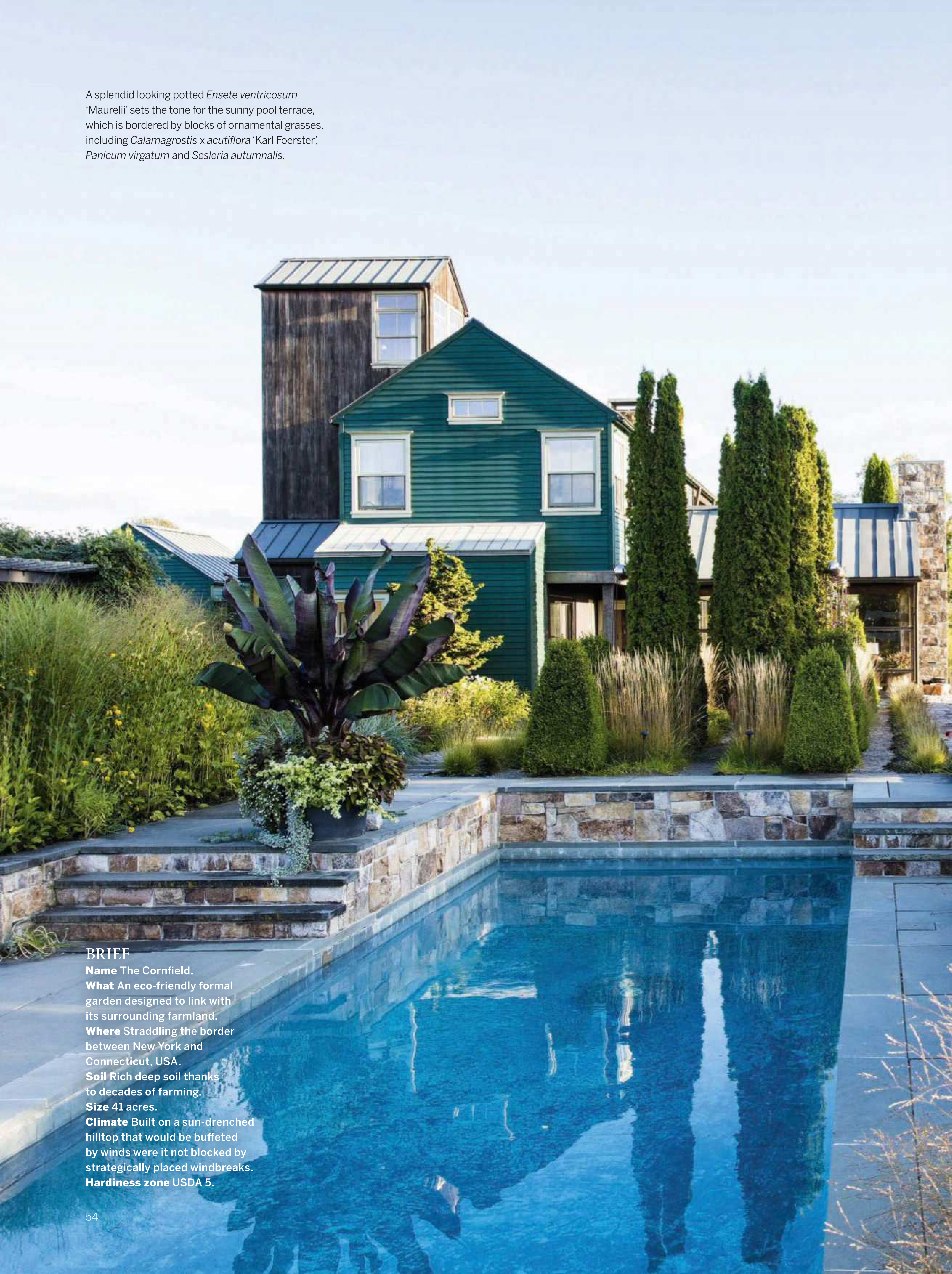
In spring we generally fill these troughs with the biennial, pink wallflower, *Erysimum cheiri* 'Giant Pink', which flowers from late March to mid May from seed sown the previous June, and has proved very successful for several years now. Once the wallflowers are over we like to experiment with different plants. This year I am trying a combination of *Lophospermum erubescens* and *Lespedeza thunbergii*. Both are plants that don't need too much deadheading so I won't have to get the ladder out too often, Containers of trailing plants look great when they're placed high on a wall, but you do need to think about maintenance. These troughs are not that high, but I do have to use a hose pipe fitted with a long watering lance to make the task easier. In October and November we lift the large, tuberous roots of the *Lophospermum*, as we would with dahlias, and keep them frost free through the winter before starting them into growth in early spring by potting them on into compost and watering. Only once the danger of frost has completely passed in late May do we plant them outdoors.

Plants

1 *Lespedeza thunbergii*
Native to Japan, its long stems, which should be pruned to the ground each spring, have attractive foliage through summer and sprays of vivid purple-red, pea-like flowers from September. Useful for growing on banks, trailing over a wall or grown flat as a groundcover plant. 1.5m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 4a-8b.

2 *Lophospermum erubescens*
A tuberous plant from the mountainous areas of Mexico where it grows at an altitude of around 2,000m. Although classed as a tender perennial it is rapid in its growth so can be grown as an annual. 1.5m. RHS H2.

A splendid looking potted *Ensete ventricosum* 'Maurelii' sets the tone for the sunny pool terrace, which is bordered by blocks of ornamental grasses, including *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster', *Panicum virgatum* and *Sesleria autumnalis.*



BRIEF

Name The Cornfield.

What An eco-friendly formal garden designed to link with its surrounding farmland.

Where Straddling the border between New York and Connecticut, USA.

Soil Rich deep soil thanks to decades of farming.

Size 41 acres.

Climate Built on a sun-drenched hilltop that would be buffeted by winds were it not blocked by strategically placed windbreaks.

Hardiness zone USDA 5.

FIELD OF VISION

In the garden around his energy-efficient home, architect Larry Wente has created a garden of luminous grasses and native plants that blends with the surrounding farmland

WORDS TOVAH MARTIN PHOTOGRAPHS CLAIRE TAKACS

DESPITE THE EMPHASIS ON GRASSES AND LOOSE, MEADOW-LIKE PLANTING THIS IS A CAREFULLY DESIGNED, WELL-STRUCTURED GARDEN WITH FORMAL ELEMENTS

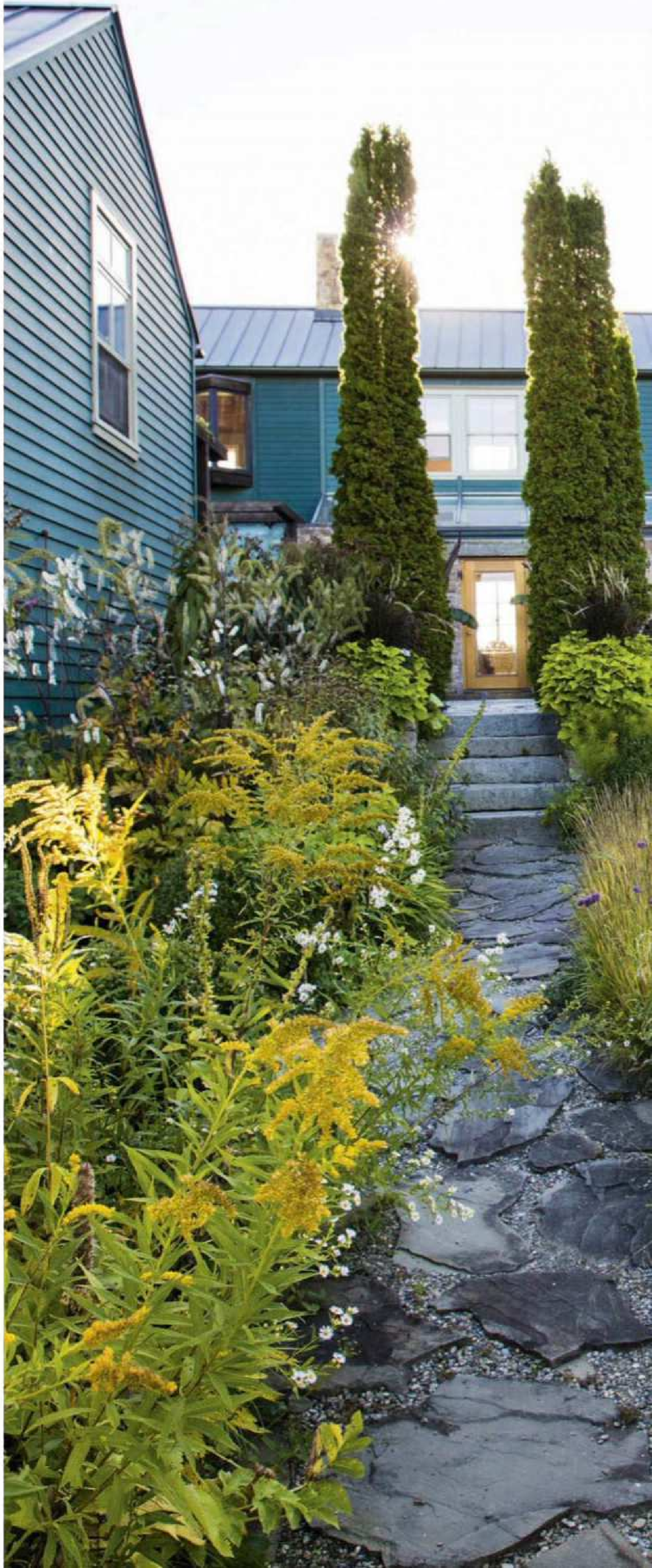
When environmental architect Larry Wente first saw the hilltop that is now his home, his view was partly obscured by tall stalks of corn and he had to fetch a stepladder to get a good look. But even perched precariously atop a ladder he could see that the site had potential, offering breathtaking views over corn and alfalfa fields to the distant Berkshire Mountains.

Seventeen years on the property – now, unsurprisingly called The Cornfield – feels an established part of this farming area that straddles the border of Connecticut and New York State. At its centre is an energy-efficient house, designed by Larry, that features a cooling tower, solar panels and a grey water system, which collects rain water for use in the house. It is also has eight doors with each one leading out into a different area of the garden. "Even when you're inside, you feel as though you're outdoors," says Larry. "I can't stay inside. I'm constantly pulled out into the garden."

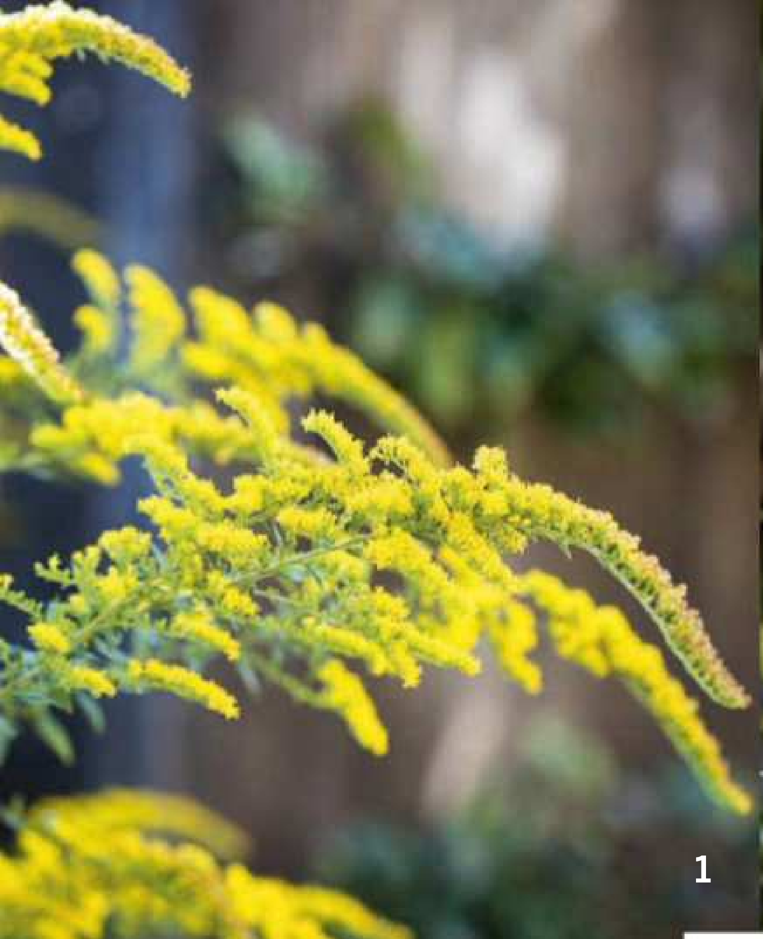
Larry designed the garden to work almost as an extension to the house, with a structure that is loosely based on the original cornfield. Its grid-like composition reflects the blocks of crops typical of farm fields. While the structural layout of the garden was largely down to Larry, the planting design was very much a joint project between Larry and his late partner Jack Hyland, featuring many native plants and ornamental grasses that blur the lines between cultivated garden and agricultural land.

Grasses have been a feature of the garden from the start. Even while the house was in its earliest stages of construction, Larry and Jack planted timothy grass, *Phleum pratense*, to hold the soil firm near the house in an area that has become a wildflower meadow. Today grasses feature throughout the many areas adding height and movement and in some areas colour – with the Japanese blood grass (*Imperata cylindrica* 'Rubra') playing its role in the red-themed planting beds. But despite the emphasis on grasses and loose,

Turn to page 62 to continue ▷



Right A path made from locally sourced stone cuts through a meadow of *Verbena bonariensis* mingling with *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Schottland' to one side and a stand of *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks' to the other. A pair of tall *Thuja occidentalis* 'Degroot's Spire' mark the steps, sheltered by box hedge and a dome-shaped crab apple tree.



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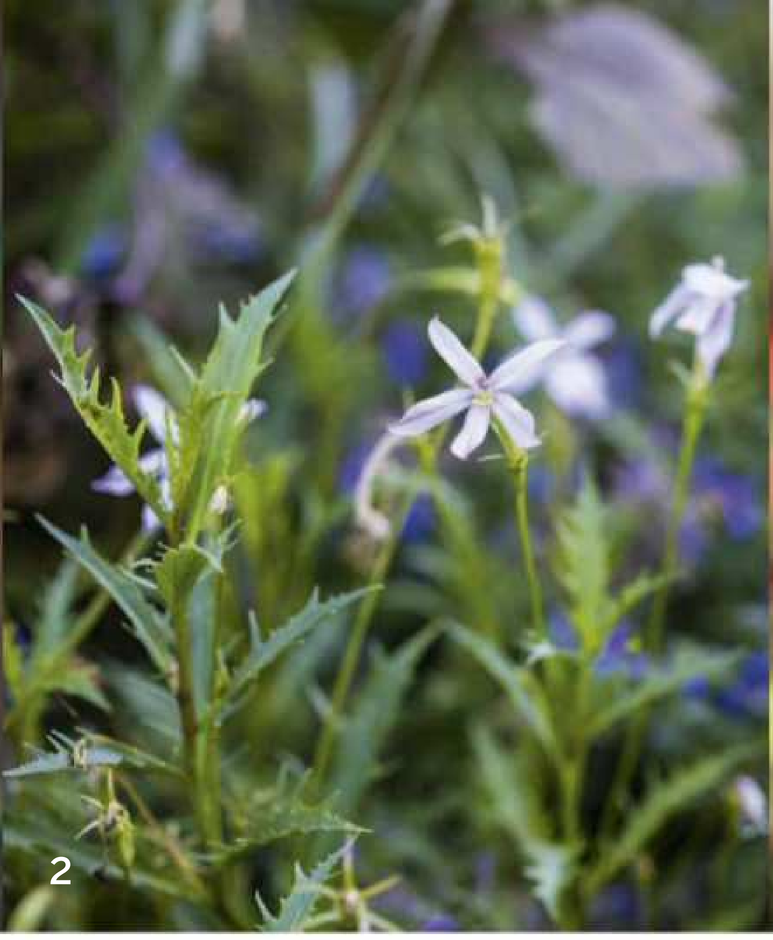

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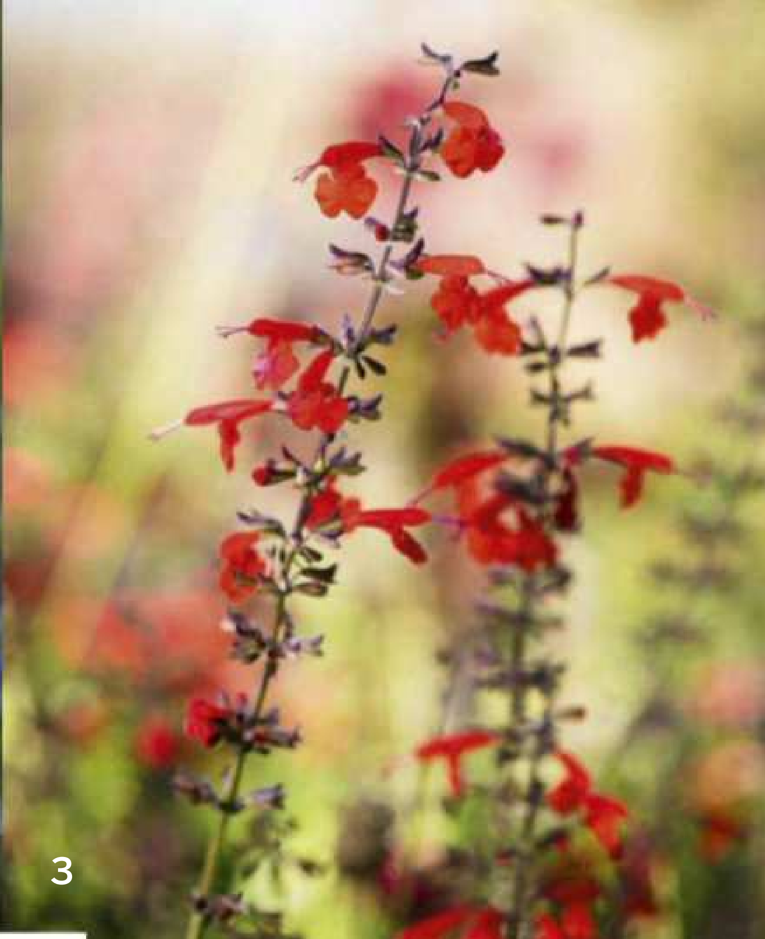


3

EIGHT KEY PLANTS

1 *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks'
The lacy, arching flower wands on the branching stems of this goldenrod cultivar bring an element of the wild into cultivated territory. 90cm. AGM*. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b†.

2 *Isotoma axillaris*
Treated as an annual, this Australian native forms an icy blue flowering groundcover. 30cm. RHS H3, USDA 10a-11.

3 *Salvia coccinea*
This tender, flaming red salvia is treated as an annual and pinched to encourage branching. It provides a spark of colour throughout summer into autumn. 60cm. RHS H3, USDA 8a-10b.

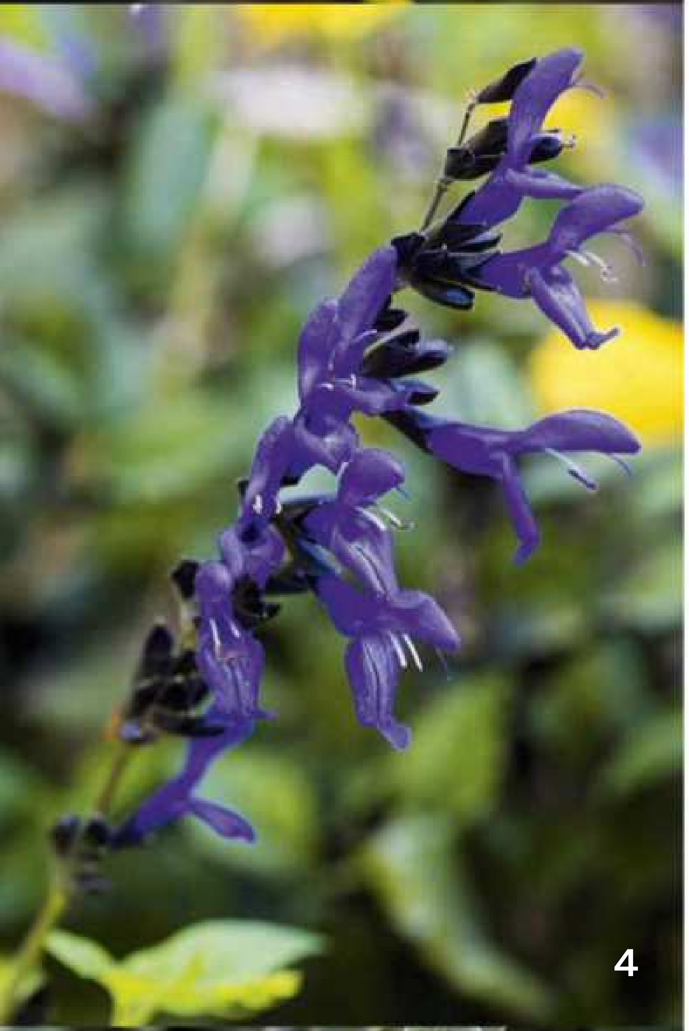
4 *Salvia guaranitica* 'Black and Blue'
Standing tall to match the height of ornamental grasses and beloved by bees as well as hummingbirds, 'Black and Blue' blooms throughout summer into autumn. 2.5m. RHS H3, USDA 8a-10b.

5 *Lablab purpureus*
Purple hyacinth bean seeds are harvested each summer, dried and started as annuals in the greenhouse. After danger of frost in spring, they are planted at the base of each gazing-ball-topped tuteur plant support. 6m. RHS H1C, USDA 10a-11.

6 *Helichrysum petiolare*
With felt-covered leaves, the licorice plant survives stoically to trail over container edges. 22cm. RHS H3, USDA 9a-11.

7 *Imperata cylindrica* 'Rubra'
Japanese blood grass can be invasive in warmer climates, but it is slower growing here. 40cm.RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

8 *Tradescantia virginiana*
This spider lily is planted along the rill together with hostas. Cut down in late July, it reblooms in autumn. 90cm. RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.



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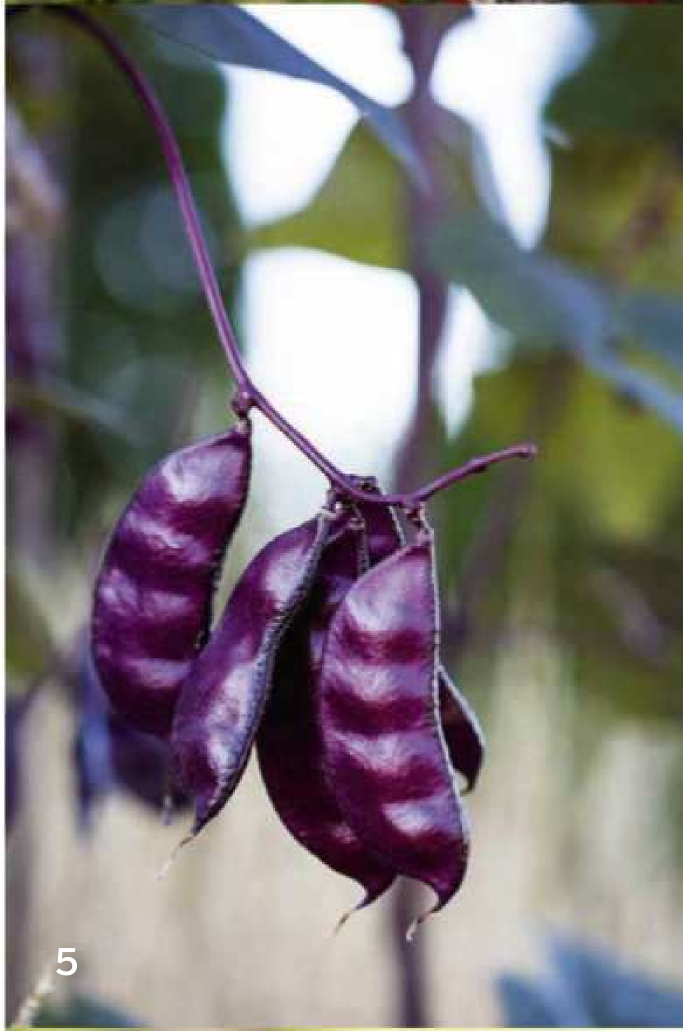

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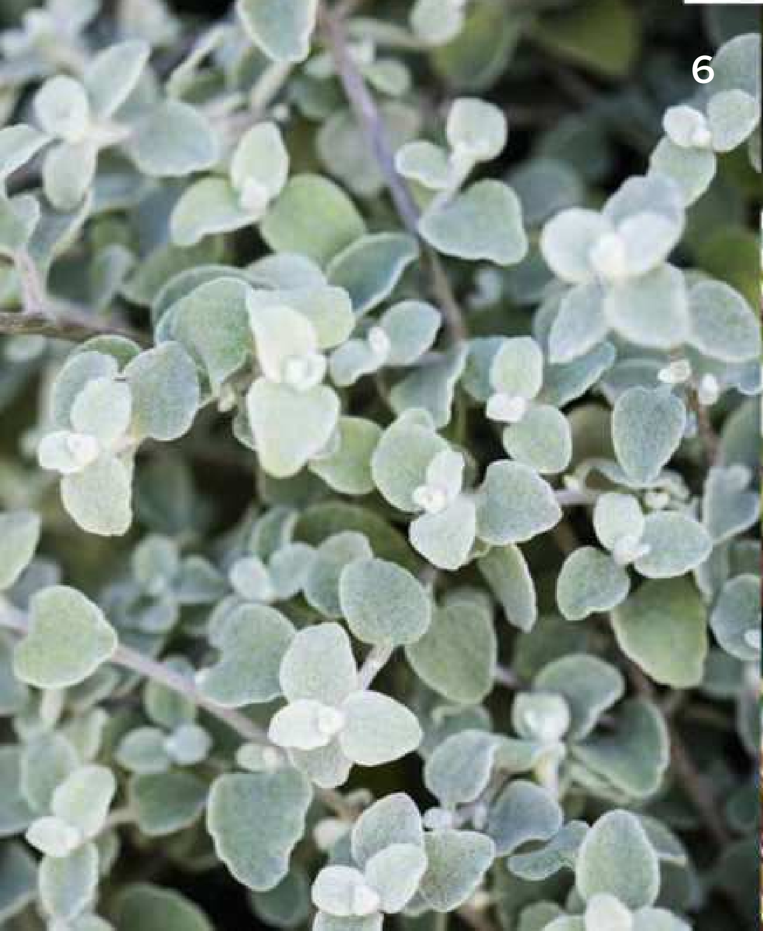

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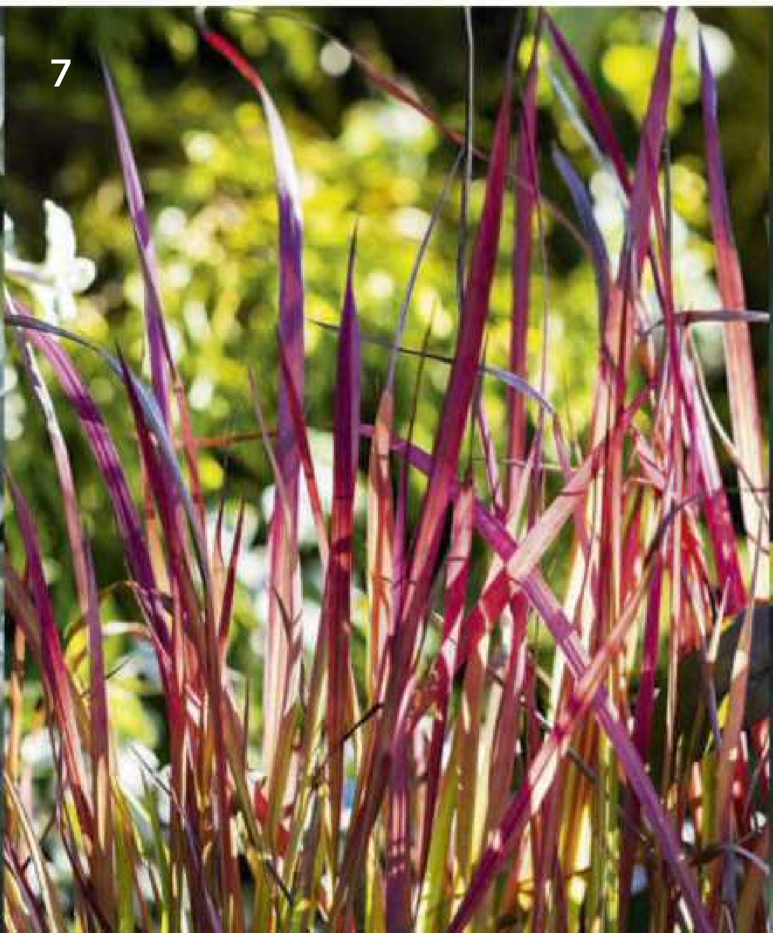

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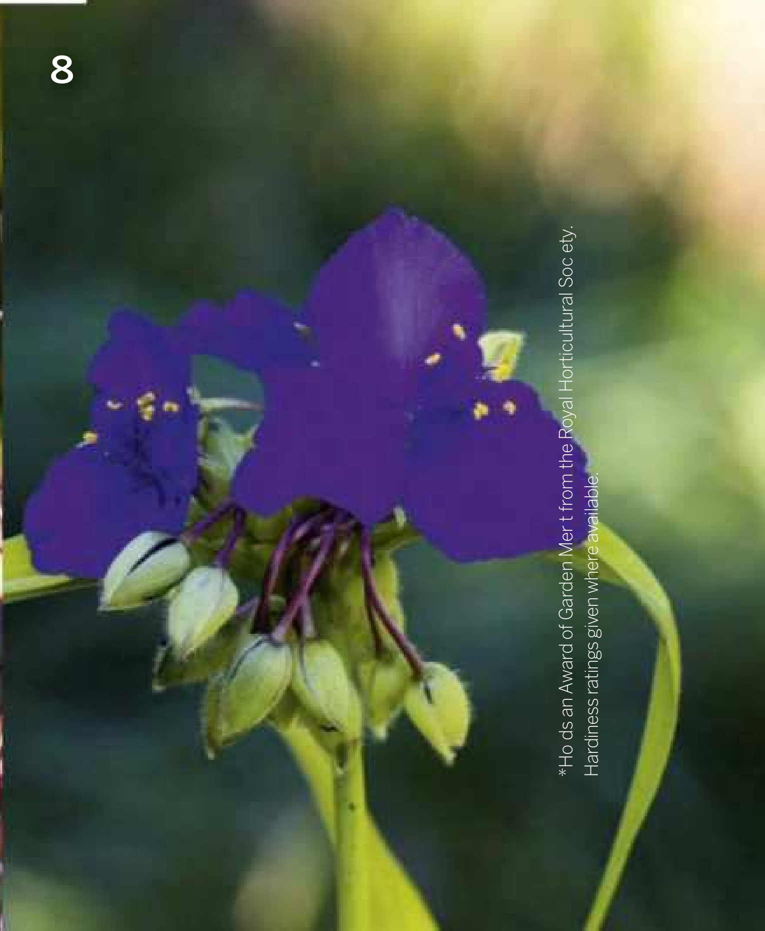

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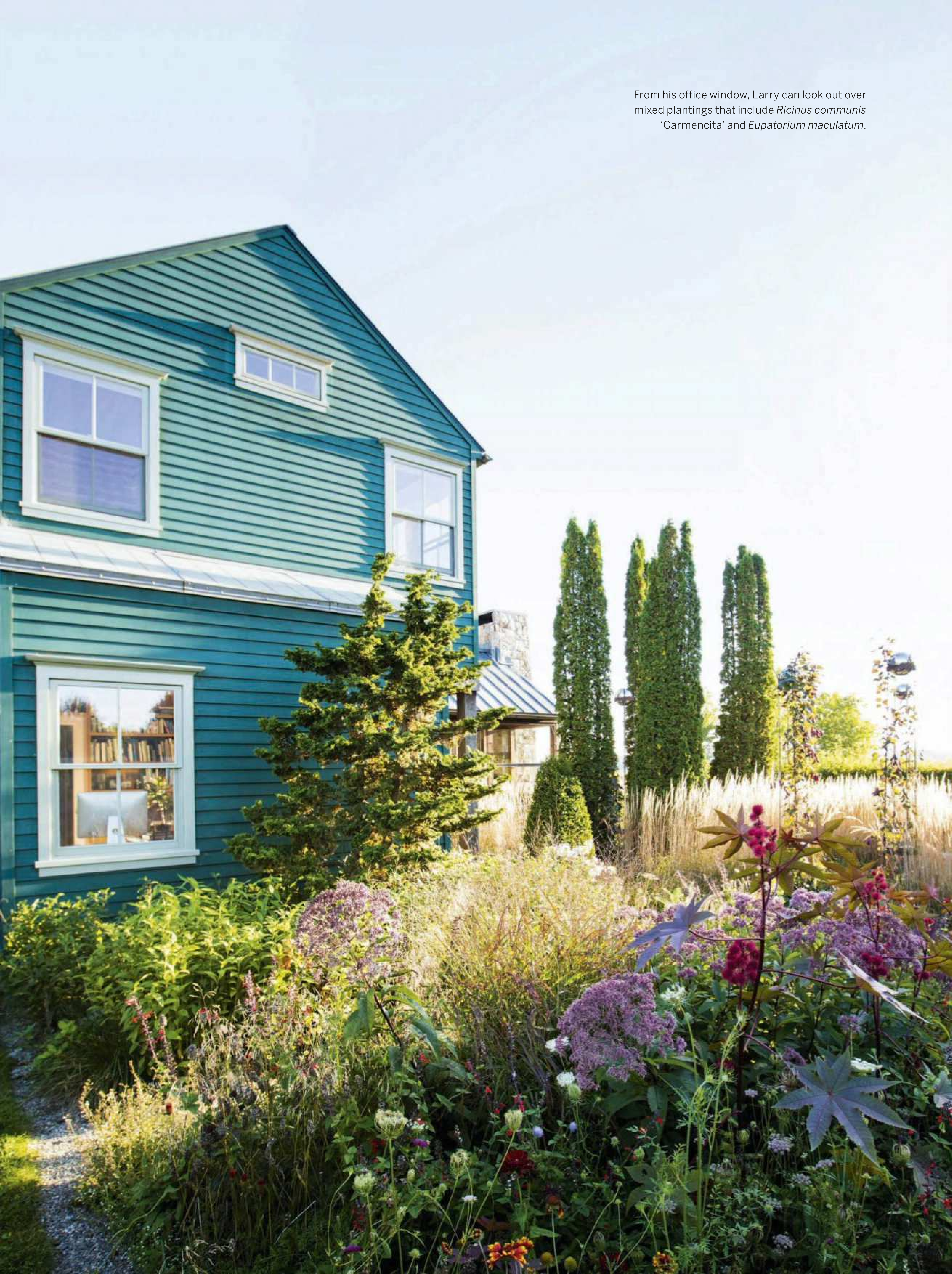
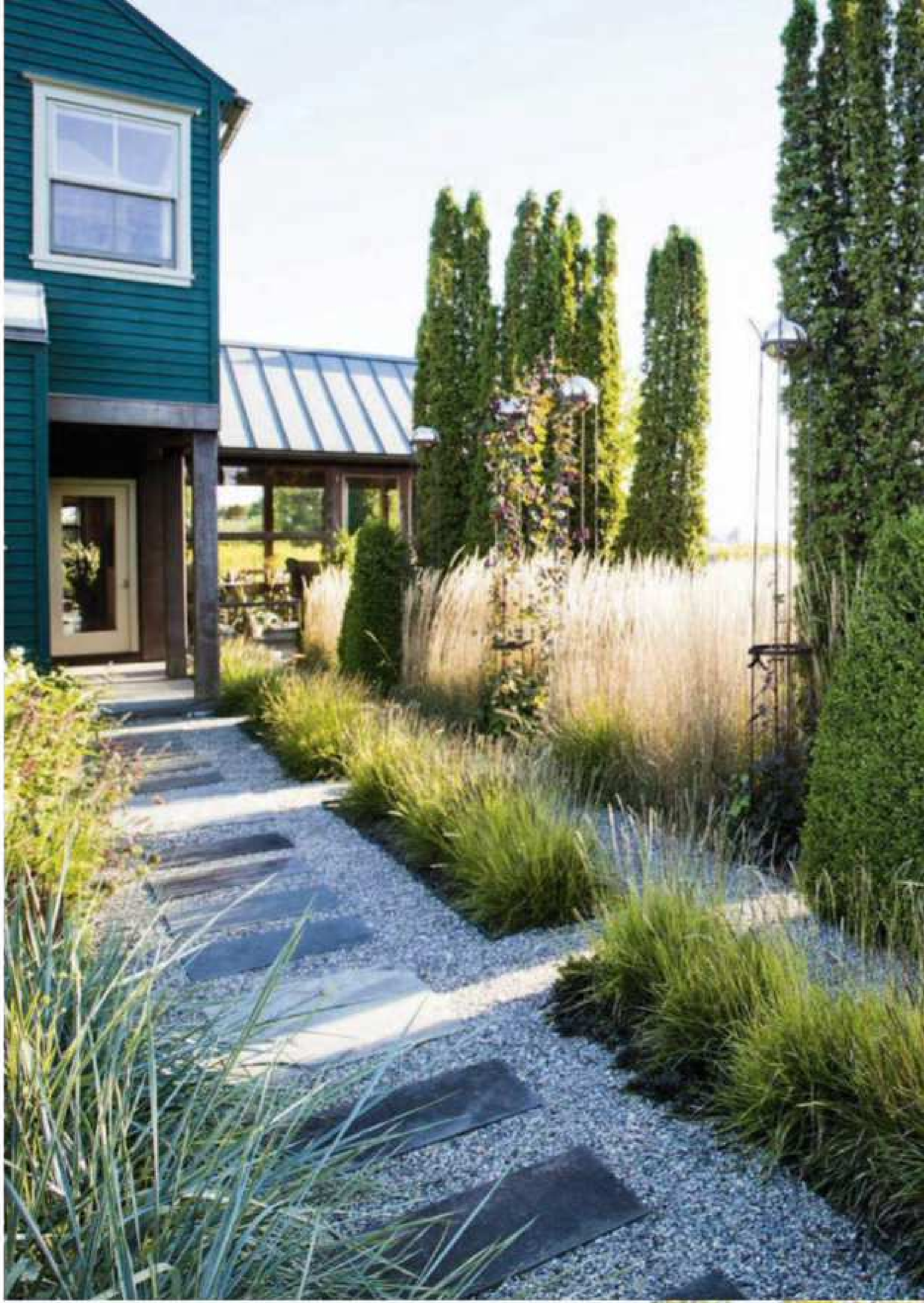
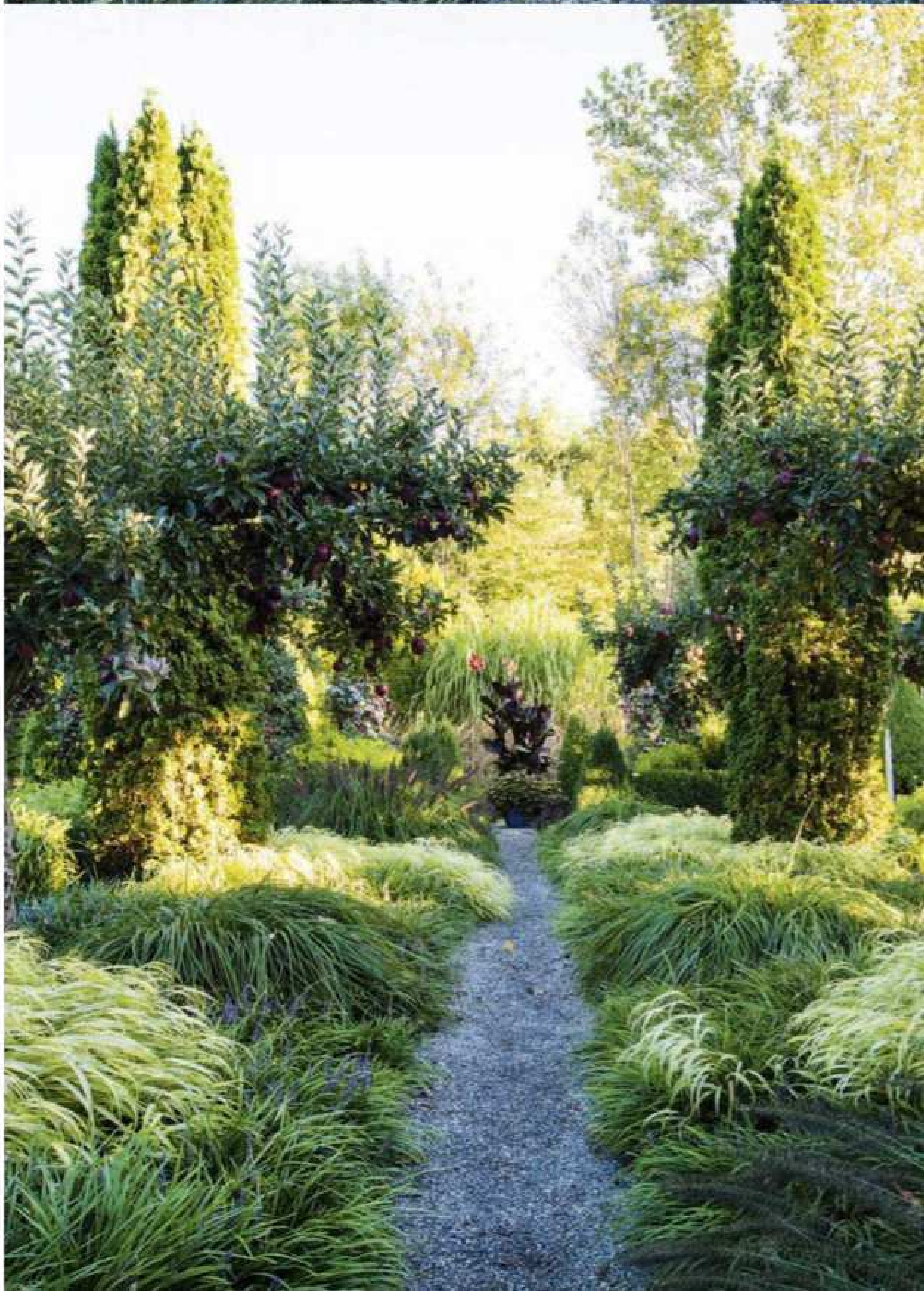
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.



From his office window, Larry can look out over mixed plantings that include *Ricinus communis* 'Carmencita' and *Eupatorium maculatum*.

THE GARDEN FEELS LIKE AN EXTENSION OF THE HOUSE DRAWING YOU OUTSIDE TO EXPLORE ALONG ITS NETWORK OF PATHS





Outside in

Even while Larry was still planning his energy-efficient home, he was thinking about how the surrounding garden would both flatter the house's design and direct the eye out over the views of the surrounding farmland and then on to the mountains beyond.

Every element in the garden is intended to complement the architecture of the house so that both house and garden had a similar feel. For a garden that primarily uses grasses and wildflowers, there is a lot of formal structure.

Sentinel towers of *Thuja occidentalis* 'Degroot's Spire' are repeated throughout the garden, used as vertical punctuation marks to the many ornamental grasses that add depth, volume and texture to the garden. When you view the garden from a distance, you notice how they create a recurring pattern and provide a sense of rhythm, but while you're inside the garden they add an air of mystery, obscuring some views until you turn a corner, and encouraging you to explore further.

The garden feels like an extension of the house – just as Larry hoped it would – always trying to draw you outside to explore along its network of paths that offer a multitude of different ways to navigate your way around the garden.

Clockwise from top left

A low planting of *Sesleria autumnalis* cuts across the gravel pathway leading to the house. On the right, taller *Calamagrostis* x *acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster' is punctuated by tall columns of *Thuja occidentalis* 'Degroot's Spire' and boxwood cones. The metal plant-supports, or tuteurs, topped by stainless steel gazing balls are another recurring theme throughout the garden.

The path to the pool terrace takes you past tall *Rudbeckia laciniata* on one side and the vigorous grass *Elymus arenarius* 'Blue Dune', which required the use of a root barrier to stop it from spreading, on the other planted alongside the tall purple-flowering *Vernonia fasciculata*.

The living room of Larry's energy-efficient home features a wide expanse of glass that provides stunning views over out over the *Solidago* meadow, and creates the feeling that house and garden work as one.

Low-growing *Hakonechloa macra* 'Alboaurea' and *Liriope spicata* form waves of green around apple trees that were rescued from a local orchard, and the repeating columns of *Thuja occidentalis* 'Degroot's Spire'. In the foreground, the rising spikes of *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Zebrinus' echo the gold and green of the hakonechloa and liriope foliage.

BEYOND THE MORE CULTIVATED AREAS ARE ORCHARDS AND WILDFLOWER MEADOWS THAT HELP TO SMOOTH THE TRANSITION TO THE SURROUNDING ALFALFA AND CORN FIELDS

▷ meadow-like planting within the garden, there is no doubt this is a carefully designed, well-structured garden. When it was still in its planning stages, Larry and Jack spent a lot of time visiting other gardens looking for ideas, and decided traditional garden styles were not for them. Although they could see that wide perennial borders might hold drama, Larry and Jack preferred gardens that offered plenty of changes of scene, areas with succinct themes that would be revealed around a bend or glimpsed through tall shrubbery or a clipped hedges. The areas they've created, which include a formal rill garden, wooded walk and the totally unexpected allée of solar panels, which in this eco-friendly garden is turned into an feature in its own right, surrounded by plantings of rows of sun-loving nepeta.

Originally, the site had no trees but Larry has planted some to add strong vertical elements throughout the garden and added a grove of pines, spruces and maples that will ultimately reach heights of 12-15m, on the edge of the property. They act as a windbreak to the strong winds that would otherwise race through to the house. Those breezes are harnessed in the tall cooling tower, which has been clad in unpainted Western red cedar to reflect local farm buildings.

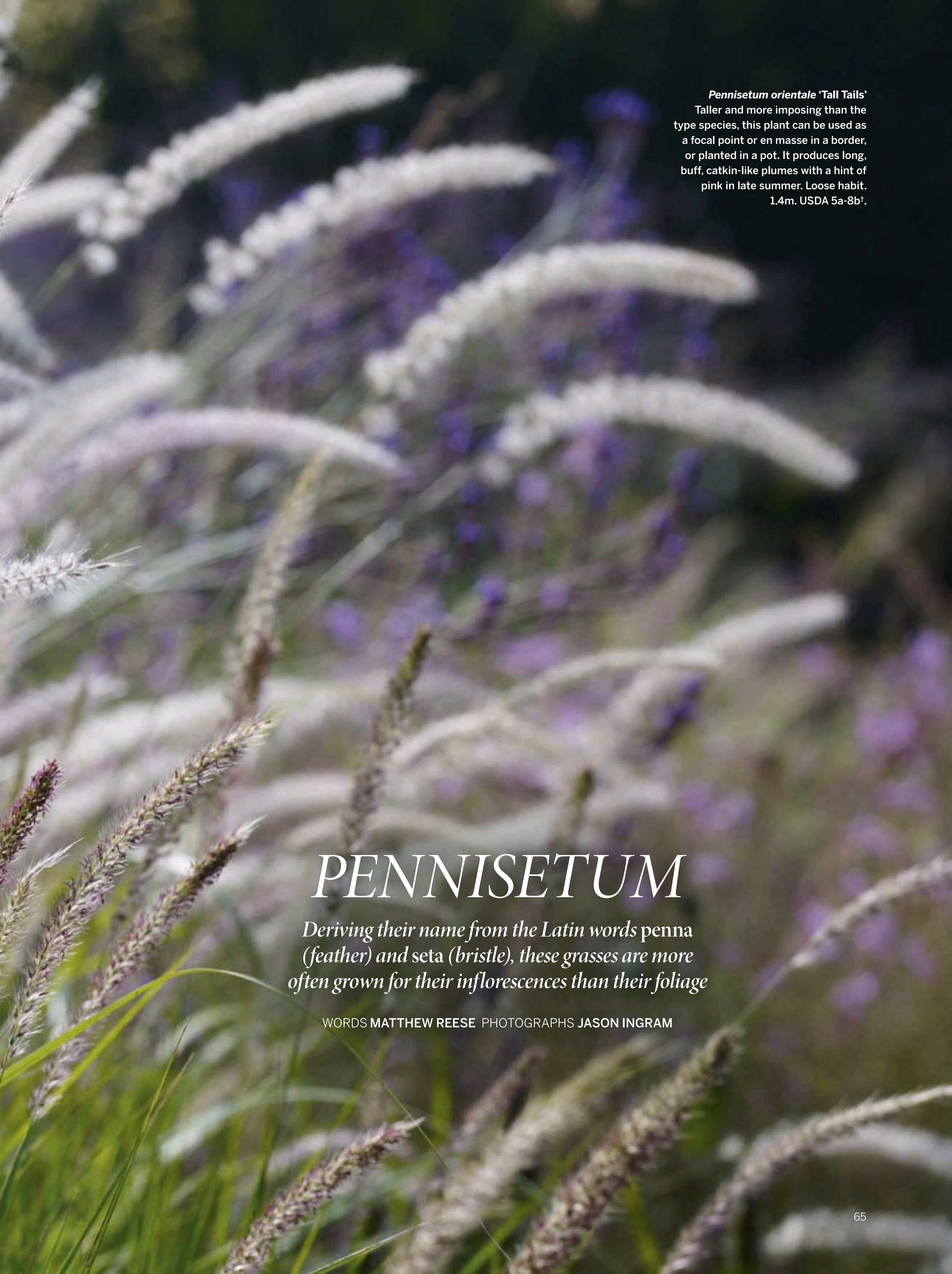
Beyond the more cultivated areas are orchards and wildflower meadows that help to smooth the transition to the surrounding fields that Larry now rents out to a local farmer. These meadows not only link the garden to surrounding farmland but serve as a reminder of the garden's own farmland past. But this is a garden that could never be accused of dwelling in the past. It's a garden that has a forward-looking vision – that sits comfortably in its surroundings and works with the sustainable house it surrounds. "Designing something sustainable was always in my DNA," says Larry. "The garden was an obvious extension of the house." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address 95 Taylor Road Millerton, NY 12546, USA.

Email lwente@gwarch.com **Open** As part of the Garden Conservancy Open Days programme. Email for details.

Right Originally, this area close to the house was planted with timothy grass, *Phleum pratense*, to hold the soil firm. It's now become a wildflower meadow made up of five different varieties of *Solidago*, some grown from seed that blew in from nearby areas. The *Solidago* attracts plenty of pollinators and creates a wonderful contrast with the deep green of Larry's house.



Pennisetum orientale **'Tall Tails'**
Taller and more imposing than the type species, this plant can be used as a focal point or en masse in a border, or planted in a pot. It produces long, buff, catkin-like plumes with a hint of pink in late summer. Loose habit. 1.4m. USDA 5a-8b†.

PENNISETUM

Deriving their name from the Latin words penna *(feather) and* seta *(bristle), these grasses are more often grown for their inflorescences than their foliage*

WORDS **MATTHEW REESE** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

I first became aware of the attractions of *Pennisetum* during my student days at Kew. Adjacent to the School of Horticulture is the Grass Garden, a wonderful oasis with a central patch of lawn that became a bolthole for students looking to relax between lessons. From this spot you could observe how visitors, particularly children, were drawn to the fountain grasses when in flower, stroking the long, bristly plumes as they would the tail of a cat.

The genus *Pennisetum* comprises about 80 species, mostly perennial, from sub-tropical and warm temperate regions of the world. Many are highly ornamental, and for the most part, clump-forming (a few are rhizomatous), with neat tussocks of arching foliage from which numerous fountains of plume-like inflorescences emerge from mid- to late summer. The seedheads persist throughout the winter and the sere foliage can be an asset during the colder months when brown becomes more valuable in the garden.

Although many pennisetums are winter-hardy, they require hot summers to perform well, and consequently have often been dismissed as too late to be useful, or thought suitable only for the warmer counties of southeast England. However, a recent influx of new selections proven to be hardy include plants that will thrive in northern counties. *Pennisetum orientale* 'Flamingo', *P. orientale* 'Tall Tails' and *P.* 'Fairy Tails' are good examples. The nursery industry has also seen a recent surge in demand for tender grasses for use as bedding, and *P.* x a*dvena* 'Rubrum', along with *P. glaucum* 'Purple Majesty', have become popular.

With so many pennisetums now on offer, we can fully recognise their terrific garden potential. When planting *Pennisetum*, consider how to bring out the best of the plant, either by planting in drifts, or, if your chosen species or cultivar is bold enough, leaving it to stand on its own. The lovely flowers and foliage combine well with late-summer perennials, such as asters or *Helianthus*. Years ago at Sissinghurst Castle, I was particularly taken with the combination of *P. villosum* with *Hylotelephium* 'Herbstfreude' and *Eucomis autumnalis*. The pastel colours were harmonious, and the shape and texture of the soft, fluffy grass flowers contrasted well with the eucomis and succulent sedum.

The shorter species are particularly well suited for the front of the border. The foliage remains smart from head to toe and acts as a useful screen when placed in front of taller perennials, such as phlox, the lower leaves of which often become ragged as the season progresses. The fine foliage and soft, arching flowerheads sway in the slightest breeze and this attribute is highlighted when planted next to a stiff shrub. Nearby plants with larger foliage will also accentuate the fine features of pennisetums and make the composition more interesting. When I worked at Great Dixter, the combination of the magnificent *P.* x *advena* 'Rubrum' with its sienna-red foliage looked particularly dramatic in the Old Rose Garden in front of the wide, paddle-like leaves of the variegated *Canna* 'Striata'.

Once the surfeit of lush greens of the warmer months has faded, we appreciate the brown shades of structural plants proudly standing through the winter much more. Many of the pennisetums are up for this challenge, and will certainly help your garden earn its keep for as much of the year as possible. It is well worth seeking out Knoll Gardens, Dove Cottage Nursery and Garden, or the Grass Garden at Kew for inspiration on using grasses in the garden. □

• Author Matthew Reese is head gardener at Malverleys in Hampshire.
Matthew's recommendations for pennisetums continue over the next five pages.

PLANT PROFILE

What Flowering grasses, with long, bristly plumes from mid- to late summer.

Origins Asia, Africa and into Southern Pacific regions. Found in both warm temperate and sub-tropical zones.

Season Most pennisetums flower from midsummer into the autumn, and some continue to hold themselves together into winter.

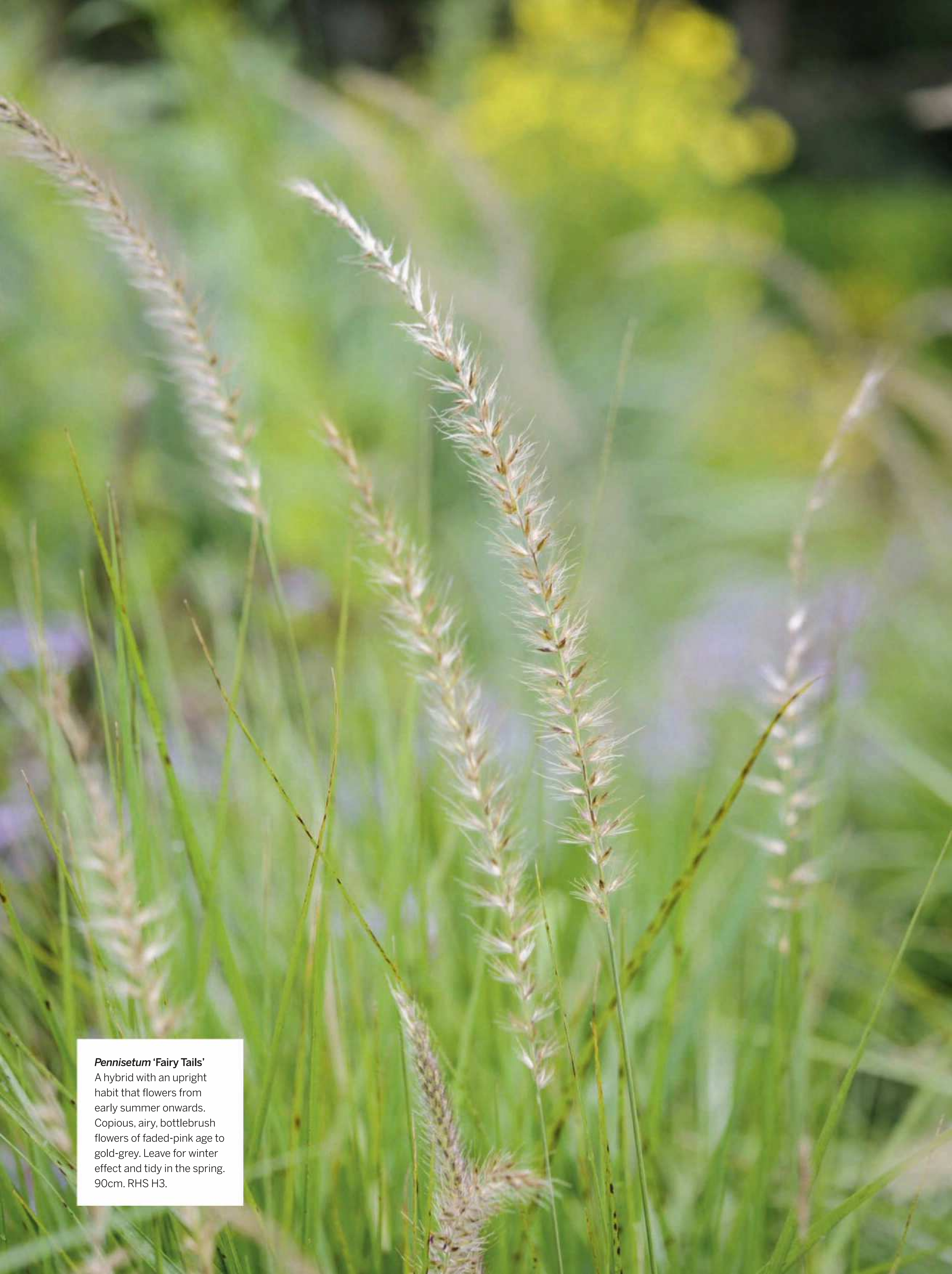
Size Small, versatile pennisetums are about 40cm tall, while larger forms grow to over 1.5m. The warmer the climate/season, the taller and larger the plants.

Conditions Most pennisetums need a temperate climate with warm summers. Although some can take drought when established, the Asian species do best in warm, moist soils that don't sit wet in the winter.

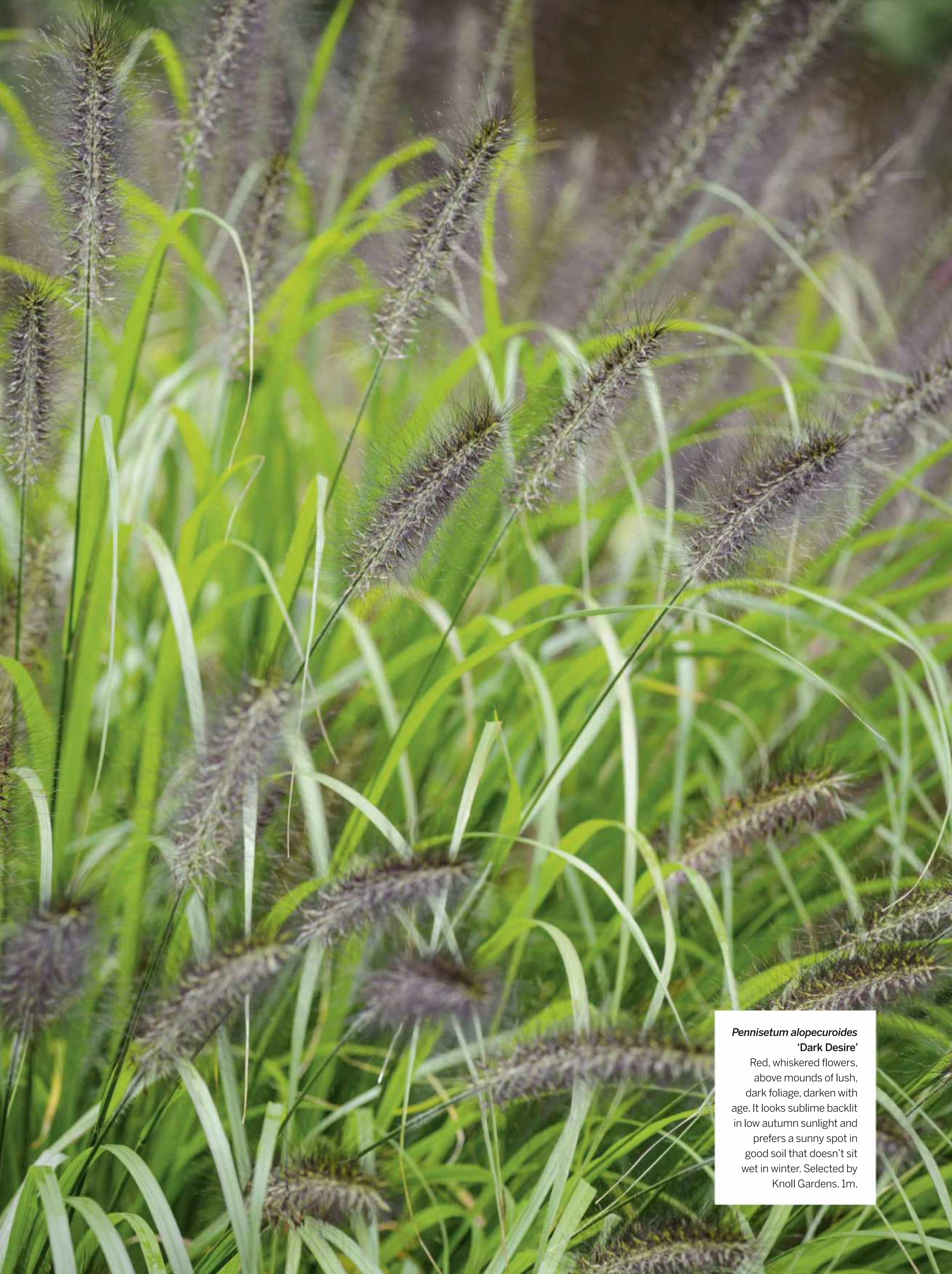
Hardiness Many are hardy in all but the coldest parts of the UK, and some are tender perennials. All do best in a warm summer. Most have an RHS hardiness rating of H3 (hardy to temperatures of -5-1ºC) and, depending on species, are suitable for gardens in USDA zones 6a to 10b.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
[†] Hardiness ratings given where available.

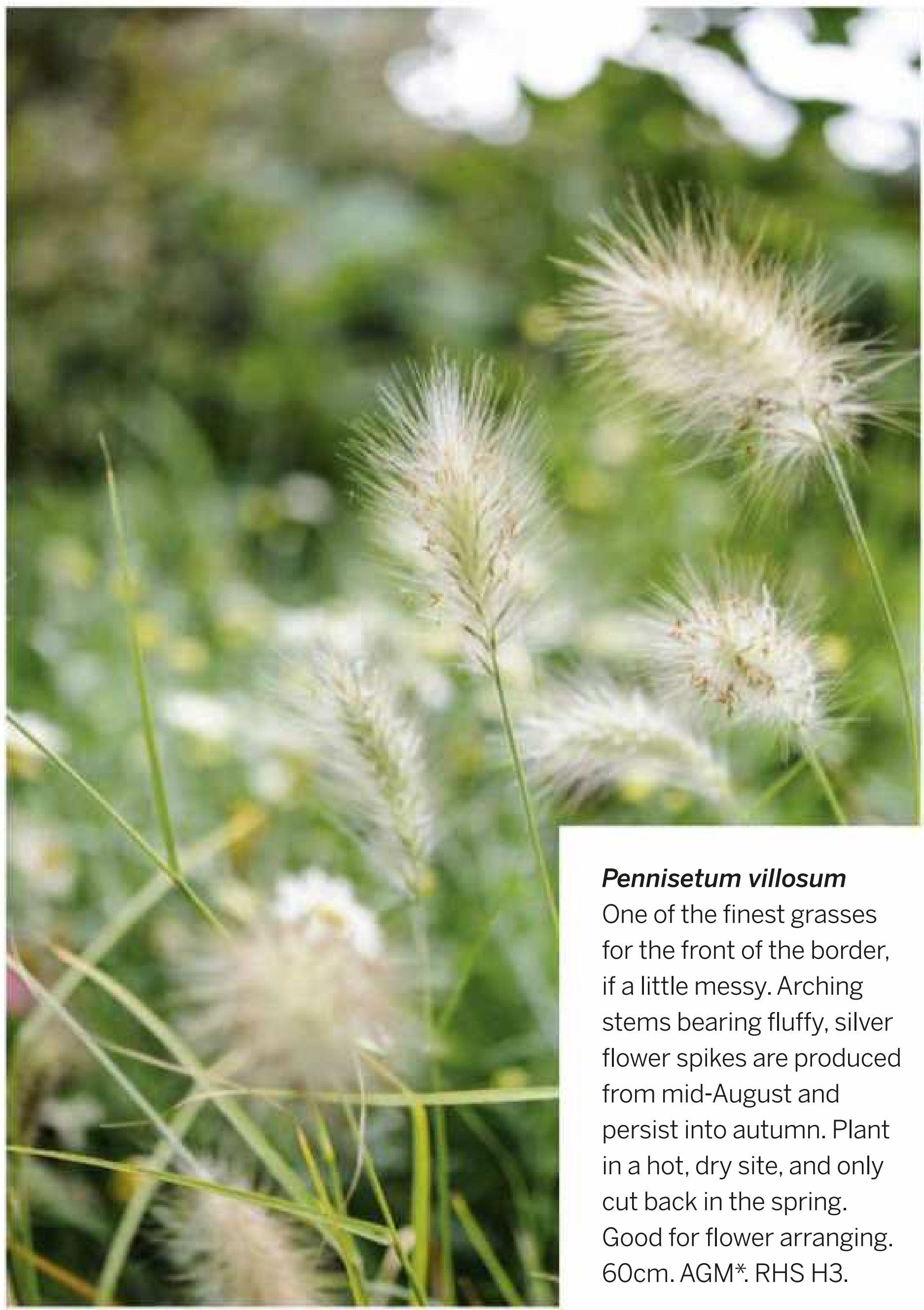
Knoll Gardens
Knoll Gardens in Dorset, where the images for this feature were taken, is home to one of the most extensive grass collections in the country. With acclaimed plantsman Neil Lucas (above) at its helm, and renowned for its naturalistic style, the garden acts as a living workshop for the adjacent nursery. The sumptuous effect created by swathes of grasses is heightened by the addition of flowering perennials. The garden also features an impressive collection of rare trees and shrubs. **knollgardens.co.uk**



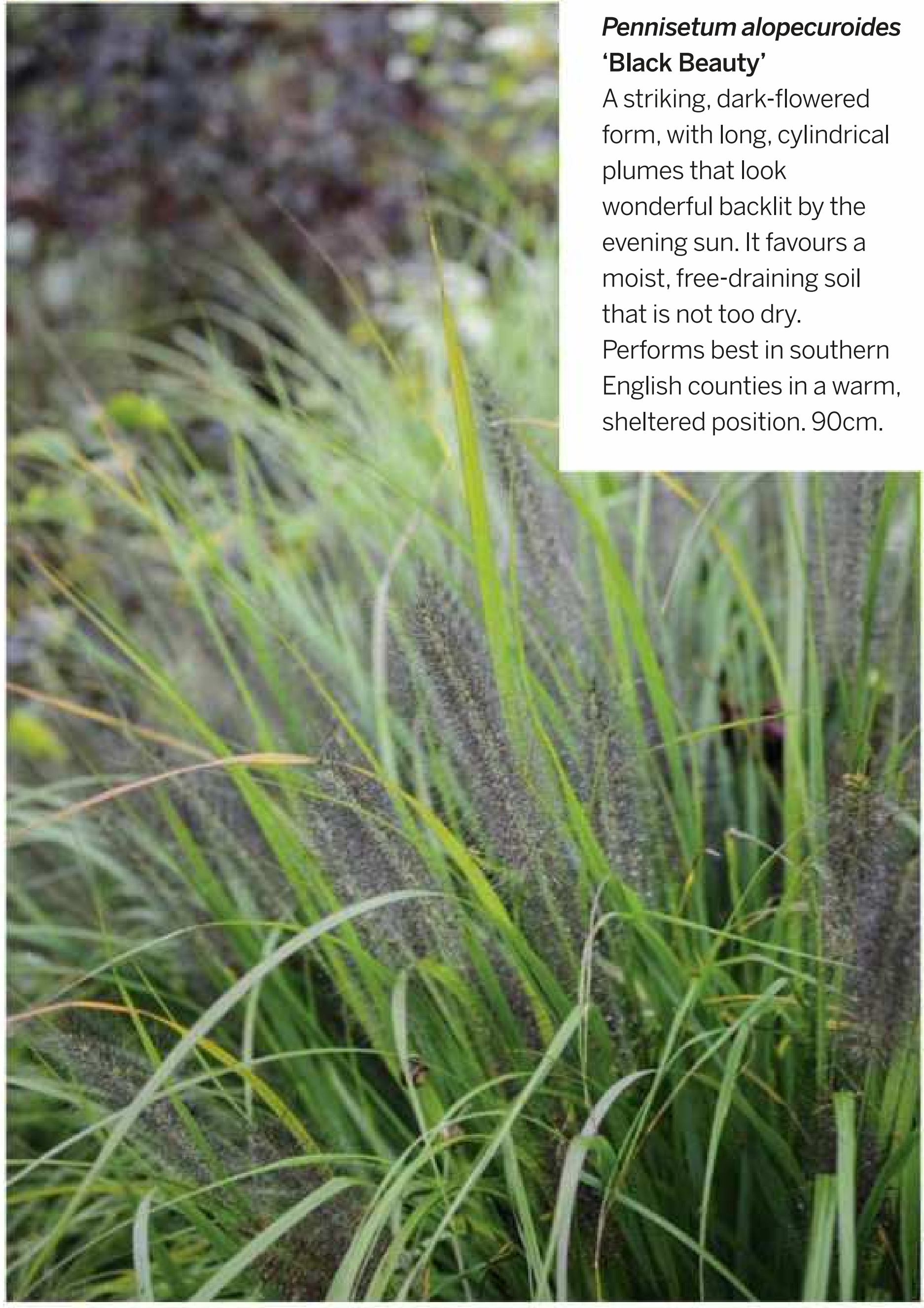
***Pennisetum* 'Fairy Tails'**
A hybrid with an upright habit that flowers from early summer onwards. Copious, airy, bottlebrush flowers of faded-pink age to gold-grey. Leave for winter effect and tidy in the spring. 90cm. RHS H3.



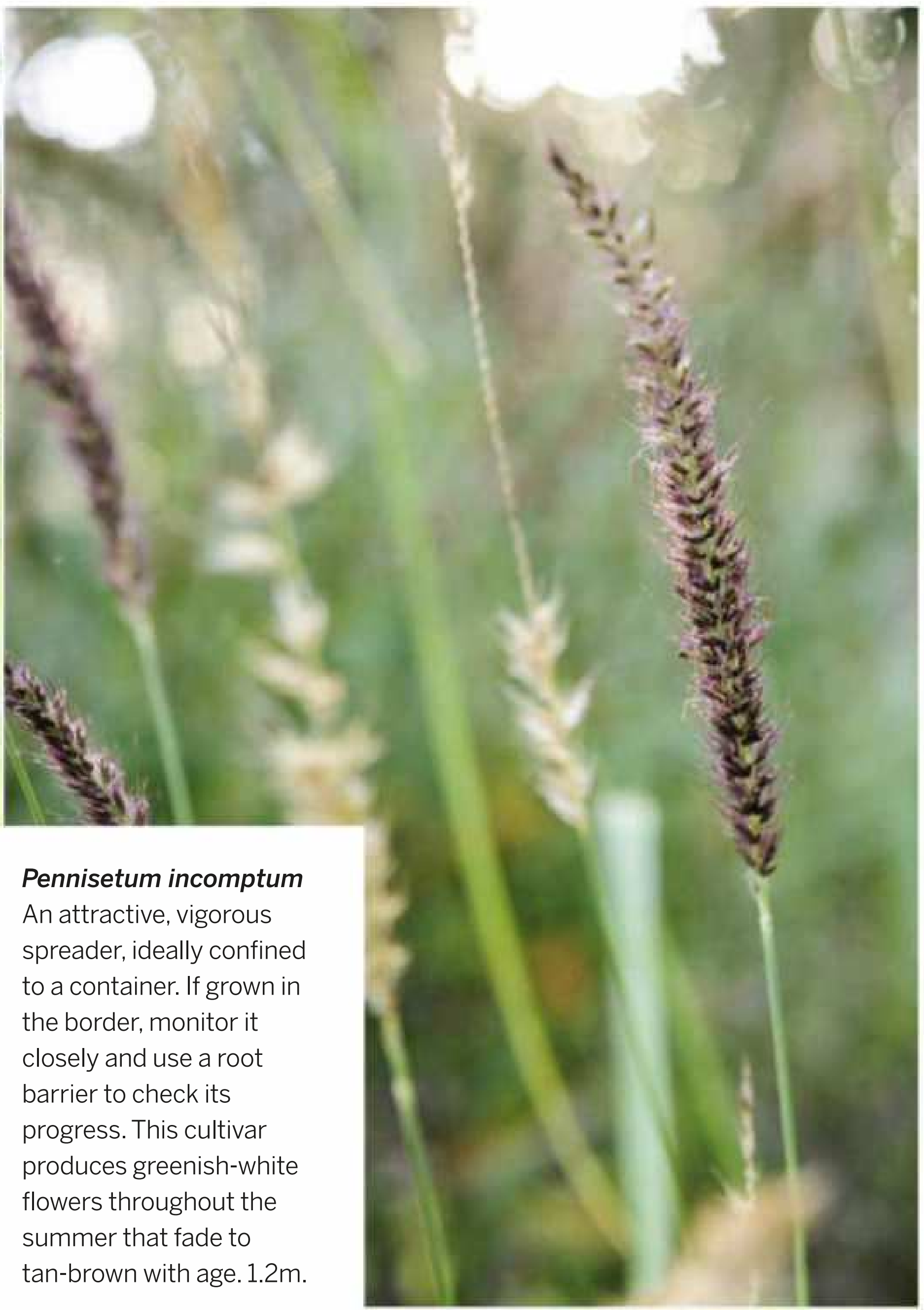
***Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Dark Desire'**
Red, whiskered flowers, above mounds of lush, dark foliage, darken with age. It looks sublime backlit in low autumn sunlight and prefers a sunny spot in good soil that doesn't sit wet in winter. Selected by Knoll Gardens. 1m.



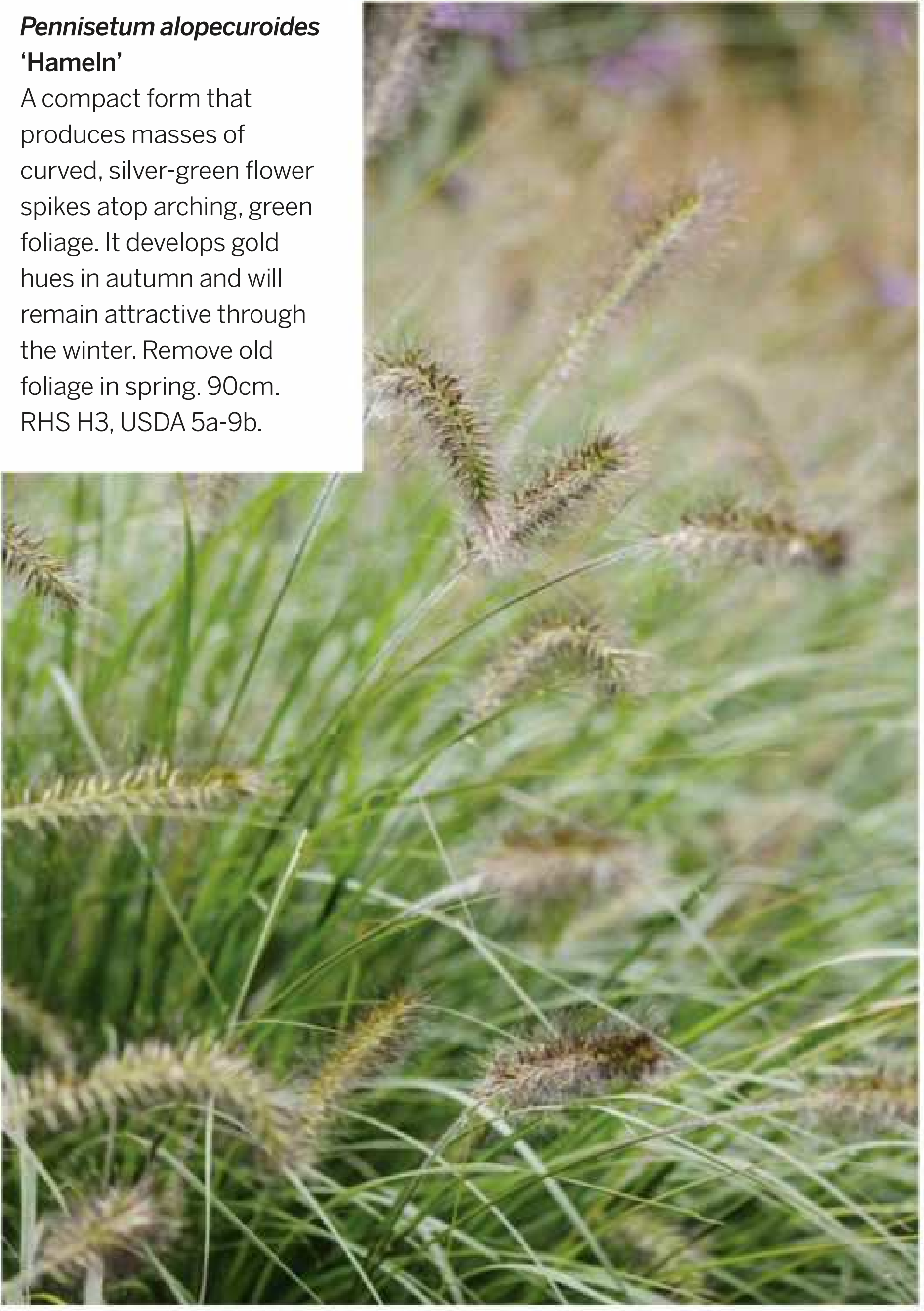
Pennisetum villosum
One of the finest grasses for the front of the border, if a little messy. Arching stems bearing fluffy, silver flower spikes are produced from mid-August and persist into autumn. Plant in a hot, dry site, and only cut back in the spring. Good for flower arranging. 60cm. AGM*. RHS H3.



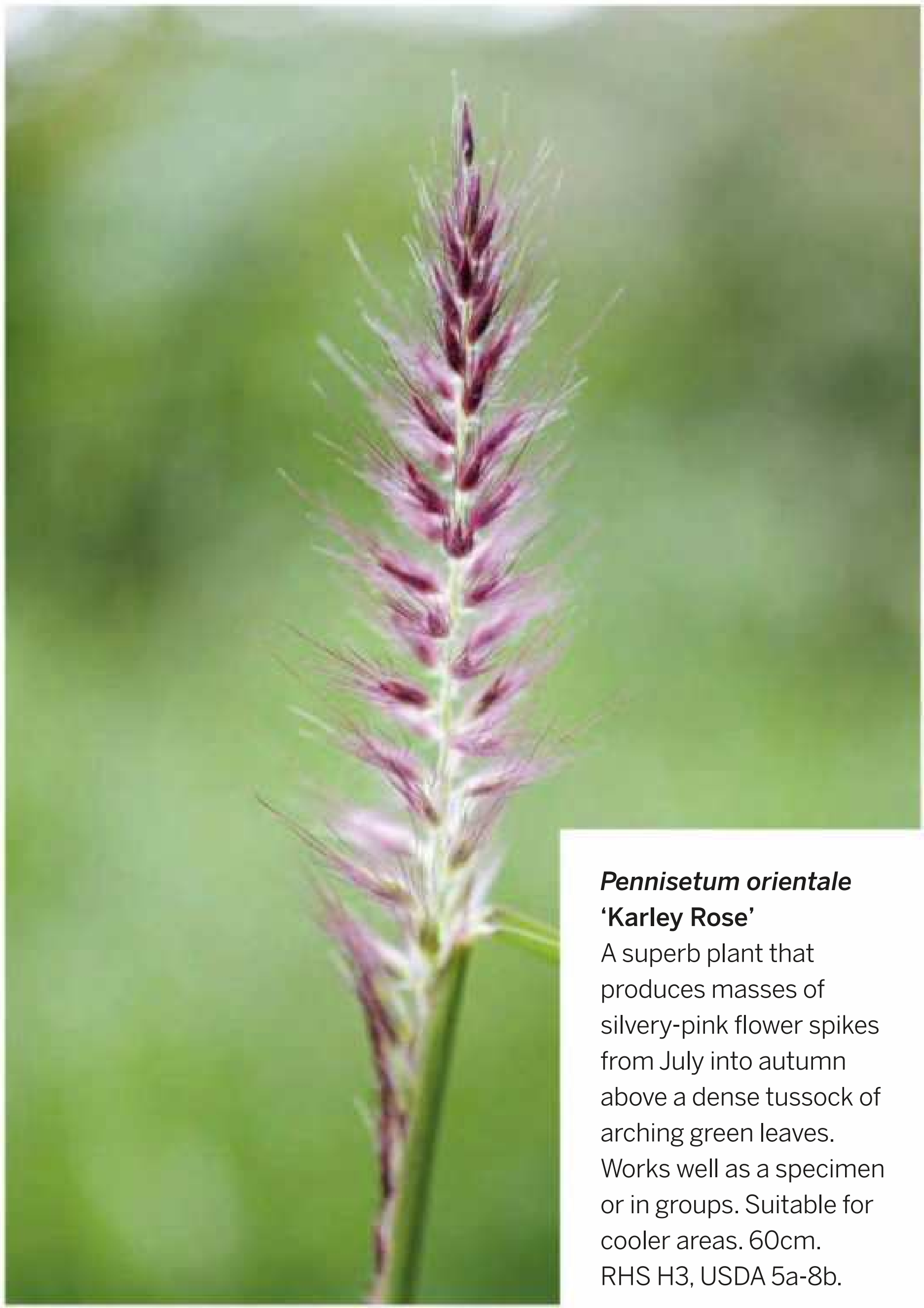
***Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Black Beauty'**
A striking, dark-flowered form, with long, cylindrical plumes that look wonderful backlit by the evening sun. It favours a moist, free-draining soil that is not too dry. Performs best in southern English counties in a warm, sheltered position. 90cm.



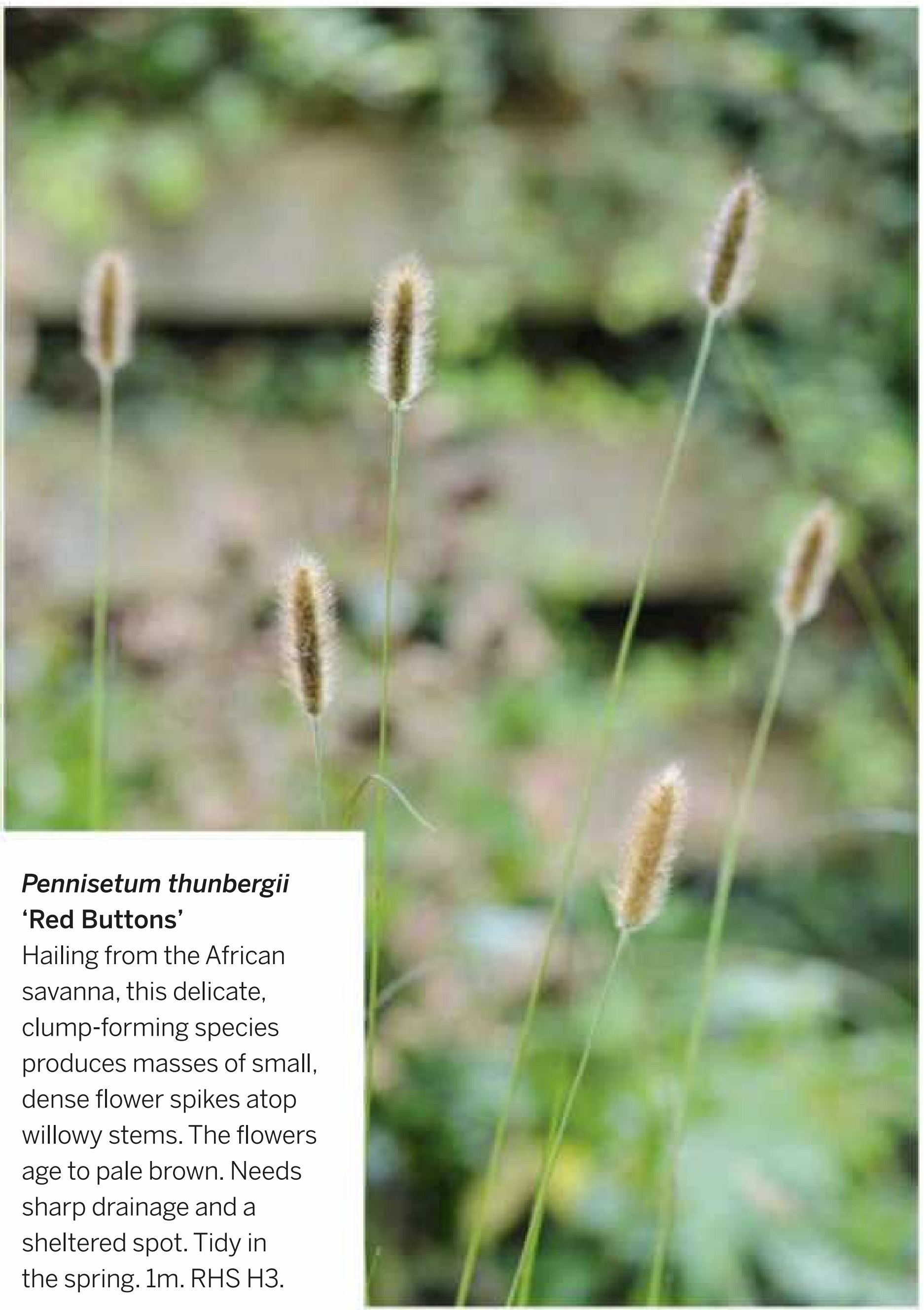
Pennisetum incomptum
An attractive, vigorous spreader, ideally confined to a container. If grown in the border, monitor it closely and use a root barrier to check its progress. This cultivar produces greenish-white flowers throughout the summer that fade to tan-brown with age. 1.2m.



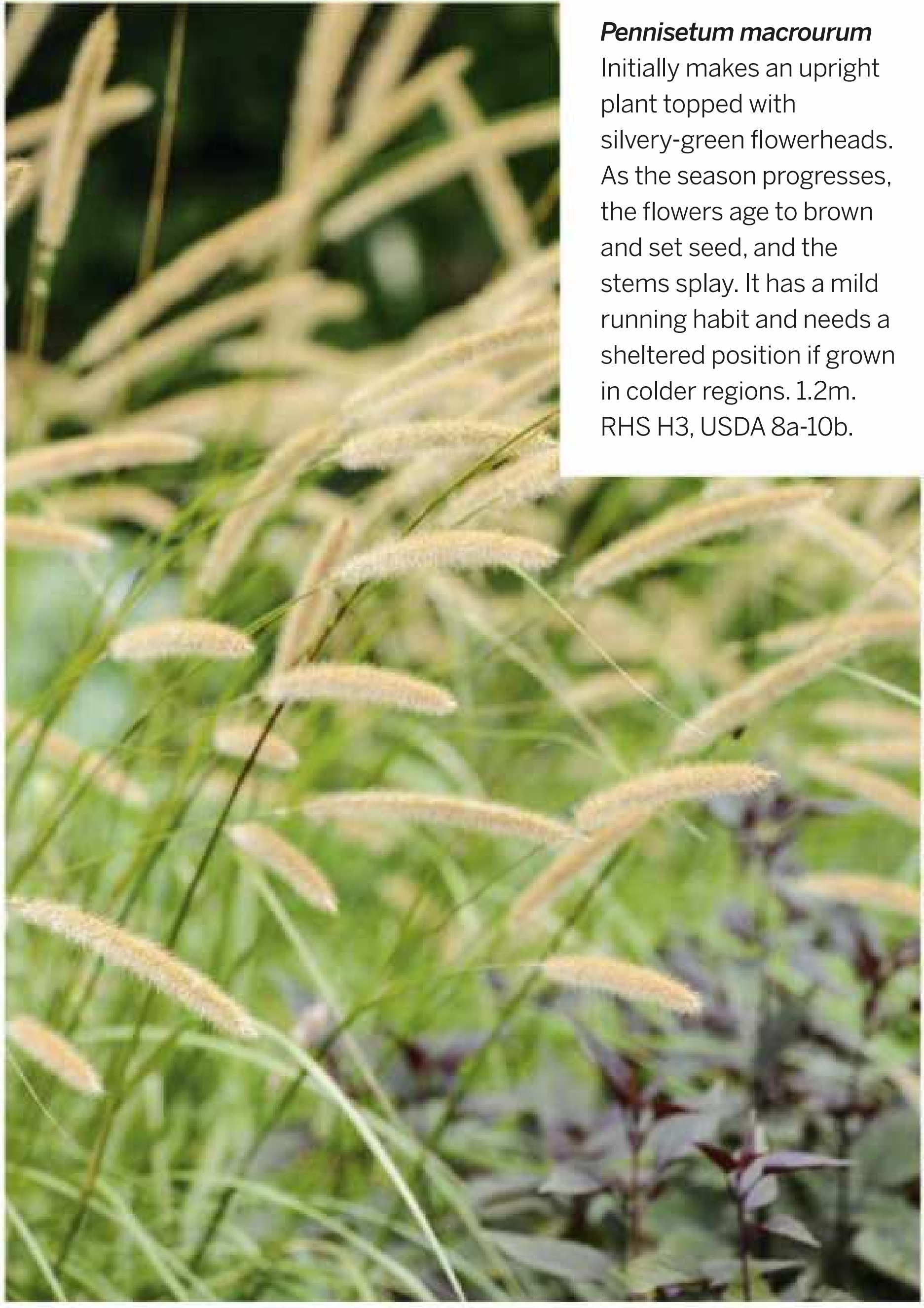
***Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Hameln'**
A compact form that produces masses of curved, silver-green flower spikes atop arching, green foliage. It develops gold hues in autumn and will remain attractive through the winter. Remove old foliage in spring. 90cm. RHS H3, USDA 5a-9b.



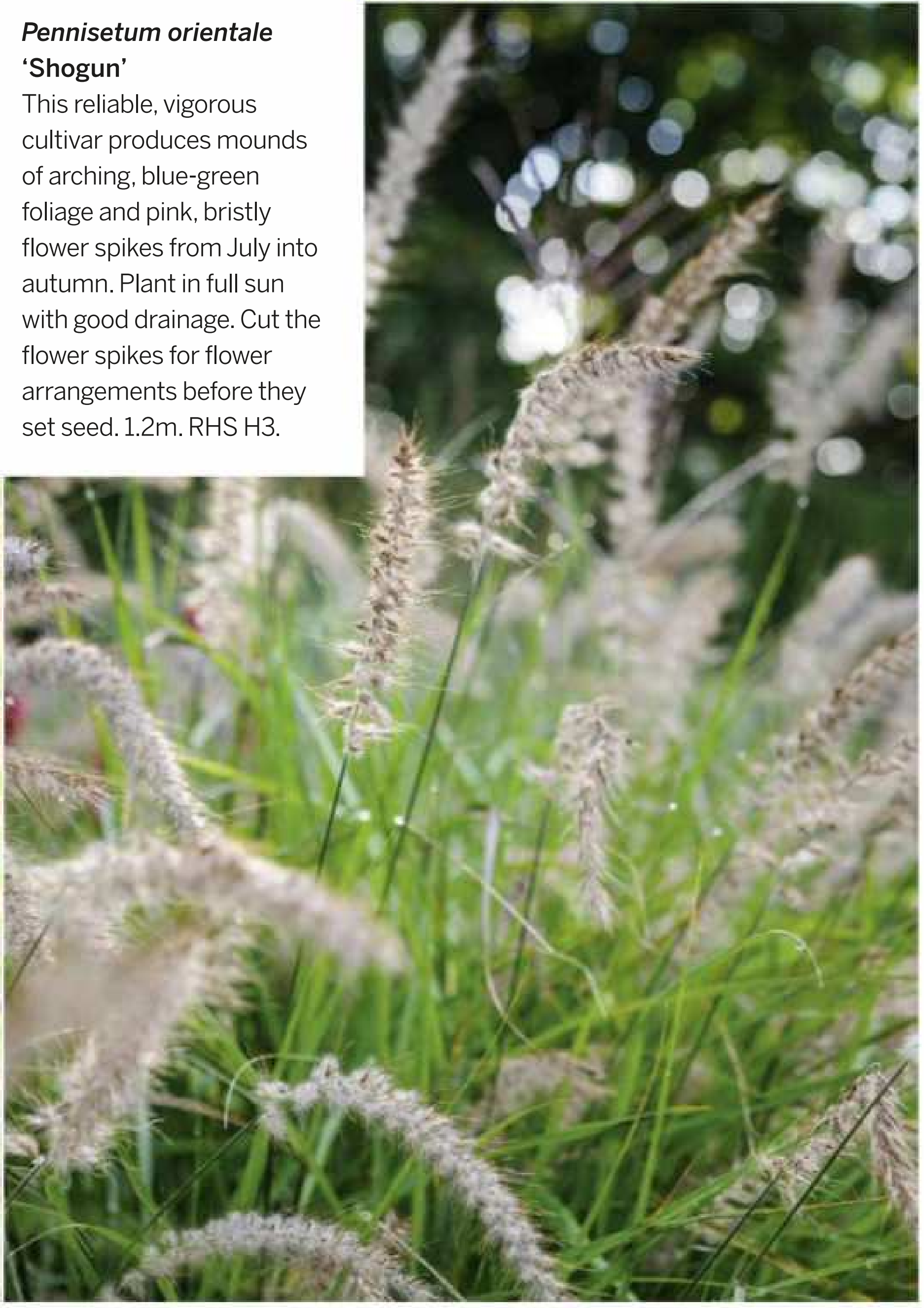
***Pennisetum orientale* ‘Karley Rose’**
A superb plant that produces masses of silvery-pink flower spikes from July into autumn above a dense tussock of arching green leaves. Works well as a specimen or in groups. Suitable for cooler areas. 60cm. RHS H3, USDA 5a-8b.



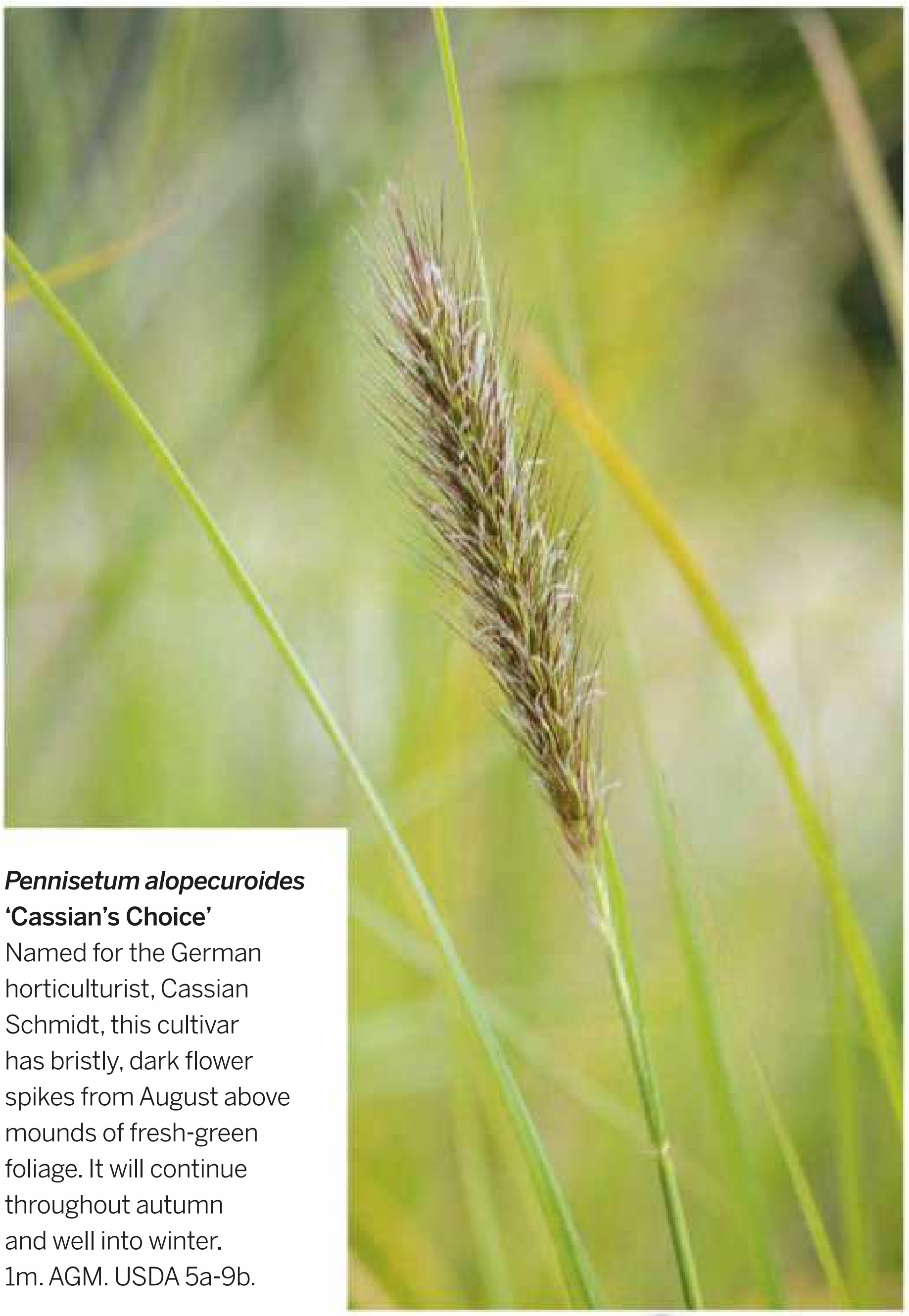
***Pennisetum thunbergii* ‘Red Buttons’**
Hailing from the African savanna, this delicate, clump-forming species produces masses of small, dense flower spikes atop willowy stems. The flowers age to pale brown. Needs sharp drainage and a sheltered spot. Tidy in the spring. 1m. RHS H3.



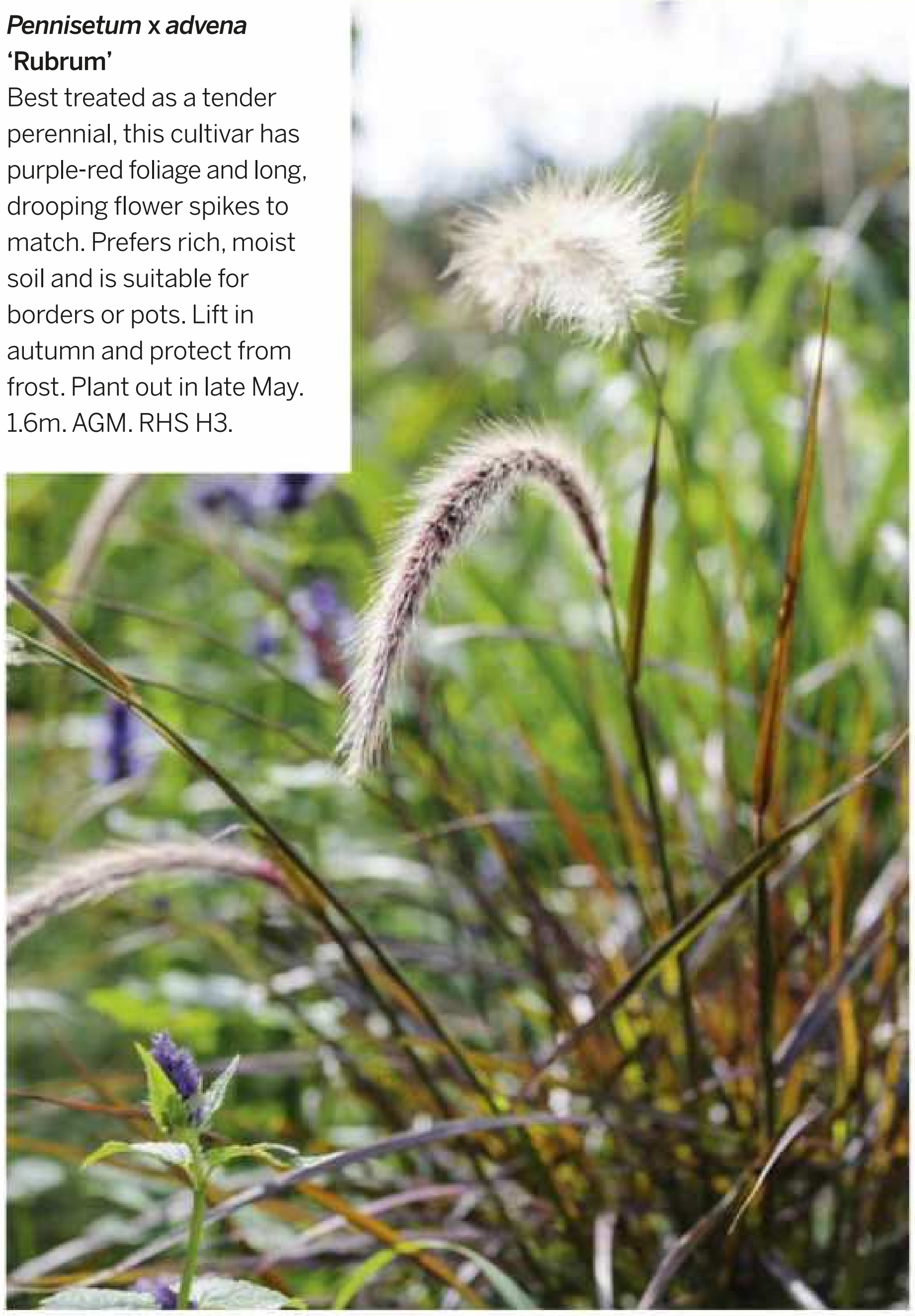
Pennisetum macrourum
Initially makes an upright plant topped with silvery-green flowerheads. As the season progresses, the flowers age to brown and set seed, and the stems splay. It has a mild running habit and needs a sheltered position if grown in colder regions. 1.2m. RHS H3, USDA 8a-10b.



***Pennisetum orientale* ‘Shogun’**
This reliable, vigorous cultivar produces mounds of arching, blue-green foliage and pink, bristly flower spikes from July into autumn. Plant in full sun with good drainage. Cut the flower spikes for flower arrangements before they set seed. 1.2m. RHS H3.



***Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Cassian's Choice'**
Named for the German horticulturist, Cassian Schmidt, this cultivar has bristly, dark flower spikes from August above mounds of fresh-green foliage. It will continue throughout autumn and well into winter. 1m. AGM. USDA 5a-9b.



***Pennisetum x advena* 'Rubrum'**
Best treated as a tender perennial, this cultivar has purple-red foliage and long, drooping flower spikes to match. Prefers rich, moist soil and is suitable for borders or pots. Lift in autumn and protect from frost. Plant out in late May. 1.6m. AGM. RHS H3.

Cultivation

Although there are many new cultivars of *Pennisetum* that are suitable for the cooler summers in northern parts of the UK, they still require a warm spot. Seek out a sunny, south-facing position, or even a sheltered location in a sun trap. Pennisetums will also be thankful for an extra boost of radiant heat provided by a wall or stone path.

Aim to plant pennisetums in late spring when the soil is warming up (a general rule true for most grasses). Avoid planting in autumn – it will be the death of the plants if you do so. On planting, improve the soil by adding a slug of rich compost, mix thoroughly with the existing soil, and add grit if the site has a tendency to sit wet. In very wet gardens, plant pennisetums next to a path, or a wall where the drainage is particularly sharp. Firm the soil around the plant to prevent wind-rock and to aid drainage.

In the right position, pennisetums are fairly trouble-free. Young plants should be given space to breathe and competition should be controlled until the plants are established and more robust. Water the plants in dry periods until they are well rooted. The quick-growing, tender species and cultivars should be given lots of sustenance and potted on regularly if grown in containers. Tender species and cultivars should be brought into a warm greenhouse or conservatory in autumn. They respond badly to root disturbance, so when digging plants out of a border, minimise disruption by retaining an ample root ball. Place the plant in a pot that closely matches the size of the root ball and provide heat. Plants will invariably suffer some dieback, which should be gently removed, but if you can keep them going, plants should recover quickly in spring.

Most species can be easily propagated from seed, and fresh seed will germinate quickly. Seedlings should be left to bulk up in their trays before moving them on into larger pots. Grasses should be potted on during the warmer months when they are growing. Plants generally don't produce roots to a significant degree during the winter months, leaving them susceptible to rot if the compost is too wet. The same guidelines apply to vegetative propagation: splitting clumps should be done in spring. Discard any old, woody parts, and keep the young, outer part of the clump. The divided portions destined for the garden should be kept to approximately 15-20cm across. Any smaller pieces can be potted on.

Where to see and buy

- **Ashwood Nurseries**
  Ashwood Lower Lane,
  Kingswinford, West
  Midlands DY6 0AE.
  Tel 01384 401996,
  ashwoodnurseries.com
- **Beth Chatto Gardens**
  Elmstead Market, Colchester,
  Essex CO7 7DB.
  Tel 01206 822007,
  bethchatto.co.uk
- **Cotswold Garden Flowers**
  Sands Lane, Badsey,
  Worcestershire WR11 7EZ.
  Tel 01386 833849, cgf.net
- **Dove Cottage Nursery**
  Shibden Hall Road, Halifax,
  West Yorkshire HX3 9XA.
  Tel 01422 203553,
  dovecottagenursery.co.uk
- **Edulis**
  1 Flowers Piece,
  Ashampstead, Reading,
  Berkshire RG8 8SG.
  Tel 01635 578113,
  edulis.co.uk
- **Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants**
  Priory Lane Nursery,
  Freefolk Priors,
  Whitchurch,
  Hampshire RG28 7FA.
  Tel 01256 896533,
  hardysplants.co.uk
- **Knoll Gardens**
  Stapehill Road,
  Hampreston, Wimborne,
  Dorset BH21 7ND.
  Tel 01202 873931,
  knollgardens.co.uk

HORTICULTURAL WHO'S WHO

KEITH WILEY

The passionate plantsman and owner of Wildside on his love of the outdoors and why he believes the only way to garden is to be bold, experimental and willing to take a few risks

WORDS AMBRA EDWARDS PORTRAIT CHARLIE HOPKINSON

People sometimes talk about having a passion for gardening, which generally means they like it a lot. But for true passion, few measure up to Keith Wiley. His garden, Wildside, on the fringes of Dartmoor, has been acclaimed as the most exciting and innovative in the UK. "We haven't even begun to explore all of the possibilities for where gardening can go," he declares, eyes glittering. "We've all done it in the same way, year after year, generation after generation." At Wildside, however, he is determined to push the boundaries of an experimental, 'style' of gardening – one inspired by close observation of nature, but with an understanding of form, a sense of narrative and a lyric intensity that lifts it on to an entirely different plane from more familiar forms of naturalist or otherwise gardening.

Over the past 14 years he has moved some 100,000 tonnes of rock and soil, three times over, to create the spectacular landscape that is Wildside – a labyrinth of serpentine paths and tree-clad hummocks, of ponds and canyons and shady groves – capturing the essence of a myriad habitats from damp Cornish valleys to the Temblor Mountains of California, from the flowering deserts of South Africa to the tumbledown barns of his Somerset childhood.

> WE HAVEN'T EVEN BEGUN TO EXPLORE ALL OF THE POSSIBILITIES FOR WHERE GARDENING CAN GO

Keith describes that childhood as 'feral', roaming the countryside in search of birds' nests, studying their habitats with a forensic exactness of observation. Most of us lose that ferocious power of concentration as we grow older, but Keith has retained it, noting the precise moment at which the movement of the sun gilds a curve of the land, or relishing the freckling of red in the shaggy bark of a pine. His father, too, was an ambitious garden-maker – always one for the grand gesture – but not so good at finishing a project, confides Keith. He has clearly inherited the bravura gene.

After training at Wye, in 1978 he was appointed head gardener for punctilious plantsman Lionel Fortescue at The Garden House. (The previous head gardener had quit, convinced, as were the garden's trustees, that it was unviable.) Keith turned it around. By the 1990s visitor numbers had soared from 200 a year to around 45,000, attracted by Keith's bold new naturalistic plantings – glorious bulb and wildflower meadows, a cottage garden inspired by the landscapes of Crete, a mythic stone circle guarded by pink-stemmed birches, and above all a South African garden that spectacularly evoked the heat and dazzle of Namaqualand under the milky Devon skies. After 25 years of unstinting commitment at The Garden House, Keith came unexpectedly to loggerheads with the trustees and quit. On his 50th birthday, Keith found himself jobless, homeless and penniless. "We didn't have enough money to buy a house. We had just enough to buy a field, and hoped we would get planning permission for a nursery and eventually a house." And thus, on a flat, south-facing, four-acre field, just down the lane from The Garden House, began Wildside, which he set about transforming with a superhuman energy, fuelled by anger and a deep sense of betrayal.

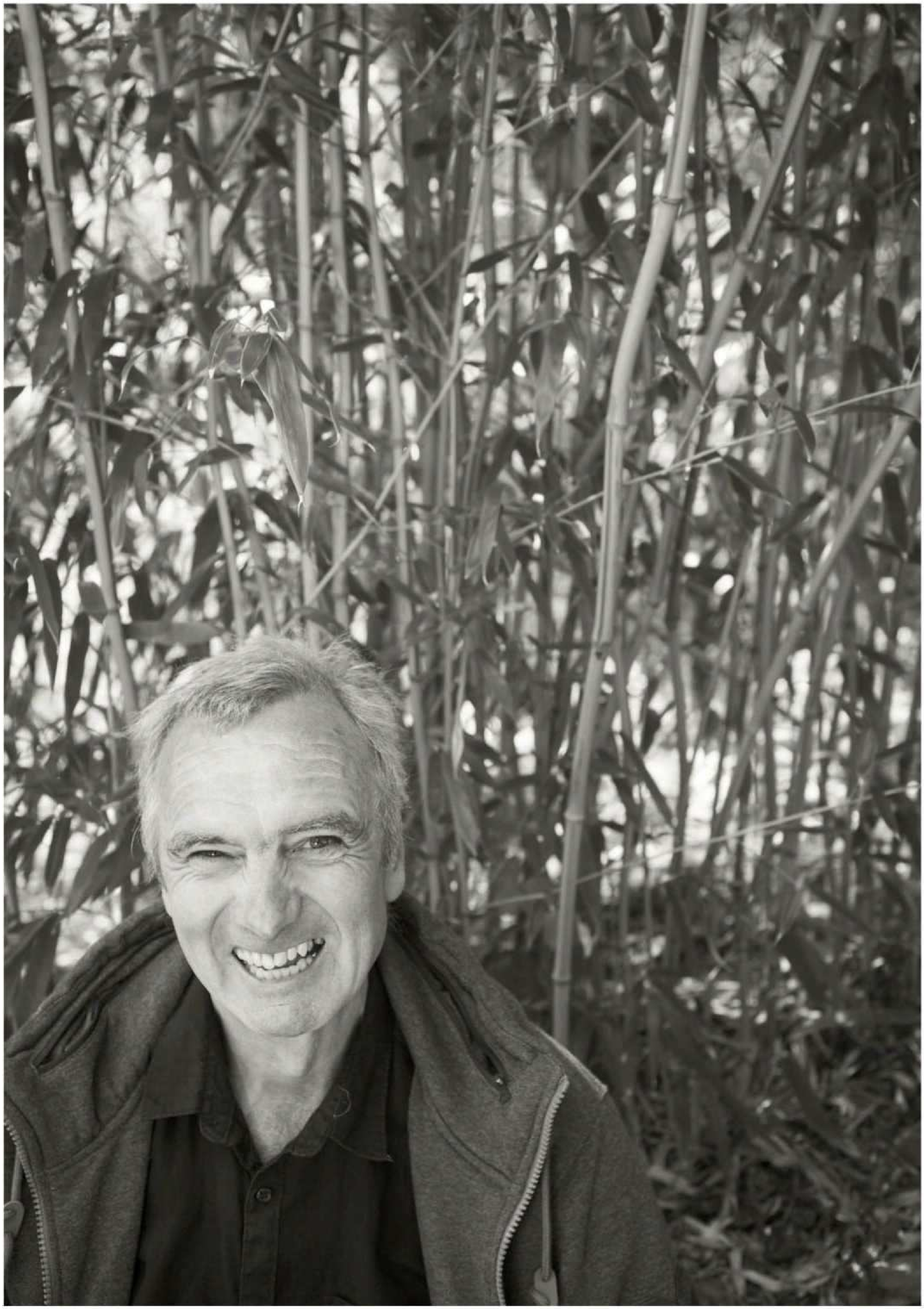
It is impossible to speak of Keith Wiley without mentioning his wife, Ros. They met at Wye, and have been inseparable ever since. Another woman might have been grumpy at waiting 14 years for her house to be built. She might have objected to the 80-hour weeks at The Garden House, and the years of unpaid toil ever since, at the lack of time for her own art (Ros is an accomplished painter), or the dearth of creature comforts. Instead, she is unflinching in her support. At one point, Keith took a few steps into the well-paid international lecture circuit, but he found it too lonely without Ros at his side, unwilling to explore new lands and lay down new memories unless he could share them with her. She couldn't go with him; there were 40,000 plants to be tended.

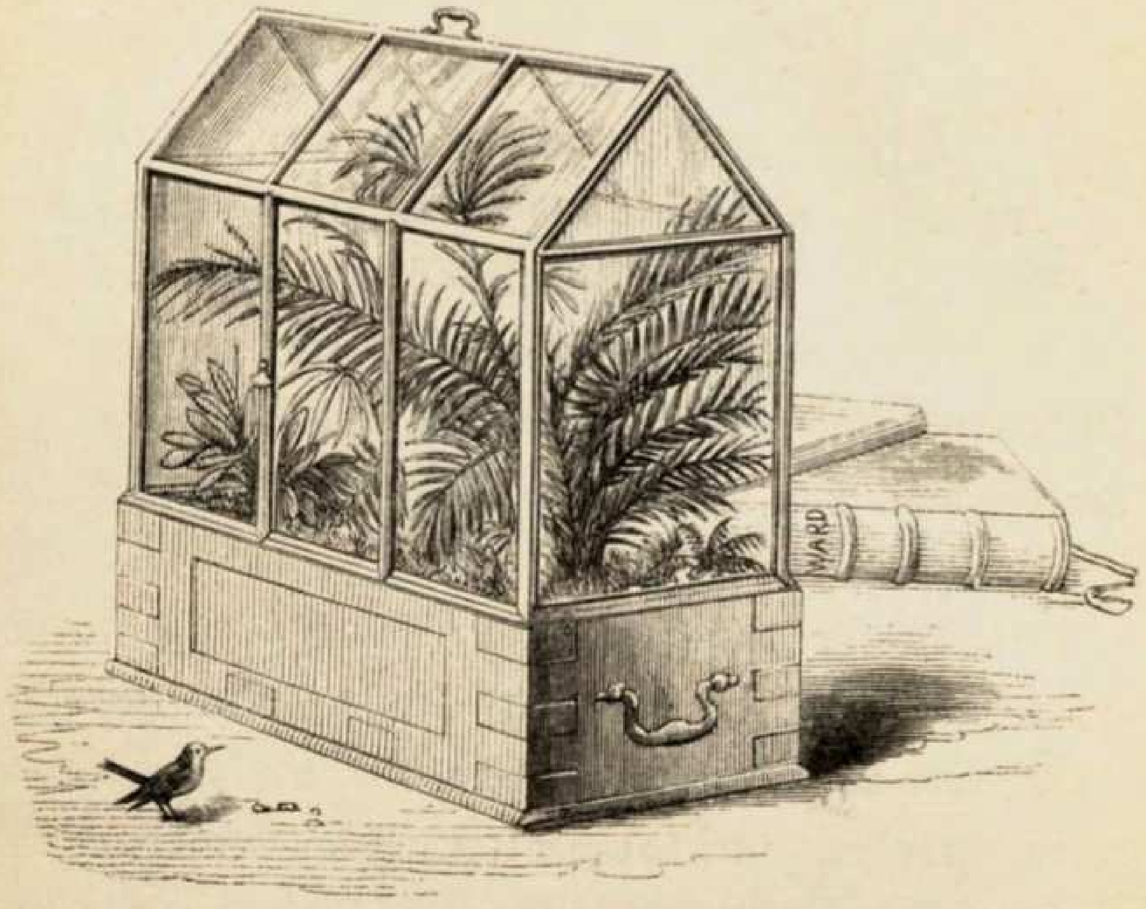
They manage the garden and nursery themselves, but rather than being daunted by the scale of the work, they are afire with new projects: a serene, faintly Oriental pond, a new and better South African garden, a series of summerhouses, each facing a different direction. Keith will reach state pension age next year – not a reason to slow down, but a welcome source of additional income to fund the works. The pair's only concession is a plan is to give up the nursery, to allow them time and head-space for painting – she in pigments, he in plants.

"The potential here is just massive," says Keith. So charged is he with a driving joy, I half expect him to shoot up into the stratosphere. "I go to bed every night dreaming about the next day. I suppose you could call it obsession." ❑

USEFUL INFORMATION
Wildside Nursery and Garden, Green Lane, Buckland Monachorum, Devon PL20 7NP. Tel 01822 855755, wileyatwildside.com
The nursery is not open to the public, but plants are on sale at the garden entrance on garden open days. See website for details.

NEXT MONTH Stephen Crisp, head gardener at Winfield House, London home of the US Ambassador to the UK.





ON THE CONVEYANCE OF PLANTS AND SEEDS ON SHIP-BOARD.

Numerous have been the methods employed in the conveyance of plants to and from distant countries. It is quite unnecessary, however, to enter into any lengthened details of these attempts, as they resolve themselves into two kinds; the one, by which the plants are meant to be kept in a passive condition, and the other, by which means are employed to keep them growing during the voyage.

RHS, LINDLEY LIBRARY

Case history

How an accidental discovery by a fern collector in the East End of London led to one of the most remarkable inventions in horticultural history

WORDS JULIET GILES ILLUSTRATION REBECCA LEA WILLIAMS

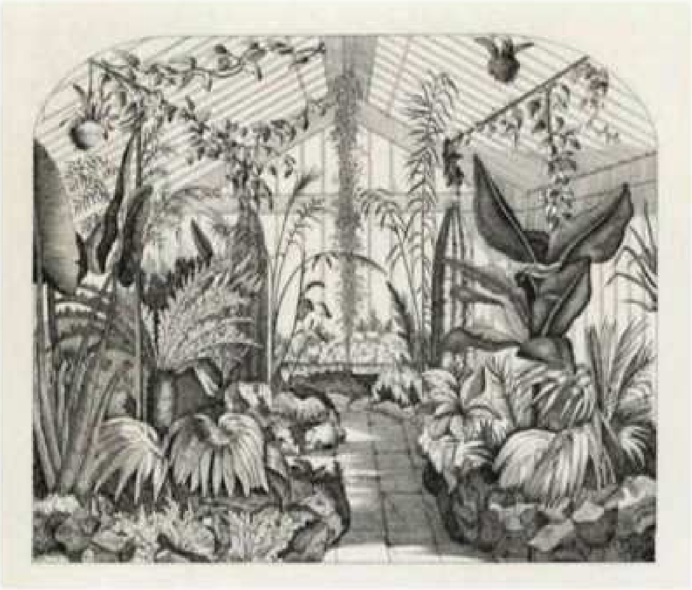
In November 1834, George Loddiges of the Conrad Loddiges & Sons Nursery in Hackney, east London, took charge of a shipment of plants from Sydney, Australia. Among the plants was the first live introduction to the UK of the delicate coral fern *Gleichenia microphylla* and several *Callicoma serratifolia* that had grown from seed on the journey. The plants had spent the eight-month voyage on the deck of the ship, unwatered, in temperatures that had ranged from -7ºC to 49ºC, but they arrived back in London it what Loddiges described as a 'very healthy state' because they were the first plants to be shipped to the UK in a Wardian case. These closely glazed cases revolutionised the movement of live plants around the globe. Loddiges estimated that before he began using the cases he would lose 19 out of every 20 plants he imported during a sea voyage, but in the Wardian cases he found 19 out of 20 was the average that survived. However, although, Loddiges was the first nurseryman to use the case, he didn't invent it, the idea had come from one of his clients, a doctor, and keen amateur botanist and entomologist, called Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward.

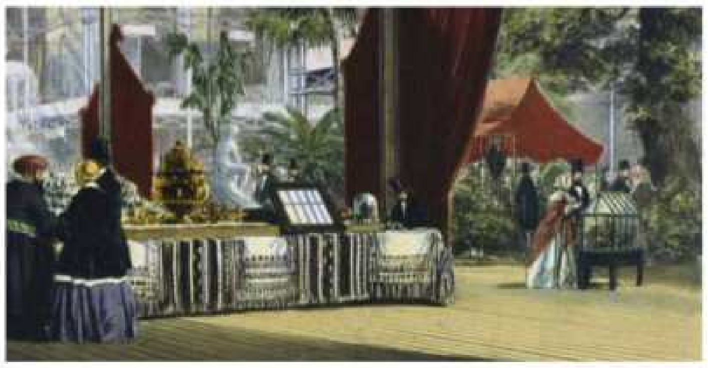
Ward had a passion for ferns and had hoped to create a fernery in the garden of his home in Wellclose Square in east London, but in the early 19th century, the air in the East End was so thick with coal soot that all attempts to grow the ferns in his garden proved futile until, quite by accident, he stumbled upon a solution. One day in 1829 he had placed the pupa of a sphinx moth in a sealed glass bottle so that he could observe more closely its metamorphosis. As he made notes on the daily changes he noticed that water from the leaf mould he'd used to cover the pupa would evaporate during the day, condense on the jar's sides and then when temperatures dropped run back down to the mould, creating a mini ecosystem. Then, as he later described: 'About a week prior to the final change of insect, a seedling Fern and Grass made their appearance upon the surface'. With the moth removed, he kept the bottle on his study window and watched how the plants continued thrive until the bottle's lid rusted.

What Ward had created was essentially a terrarium, and a way for him to grow ferns. But after successful experiments with a range of other plants he began see other uses. As a doctor in the East End he was acutely aware of the problems of poor nutrition among the poor and hoped the cases might be a way for many to grow vegetables in polluted cities, but he also saw another, more commercial, use: as a solution to the problems in transporting plants by sea. At the time, plants would often be left to languish in a ship's cargo where they mostly died through lack of light and fresh water, but even if kept on deck, they could perish through exposure to salt water, winds and extremes of temperature. Ward was convinced his sealed cases would allow plants to be stored for several months on deck in sunlight, without any attention or watering. To prove his point, in June 1833 he and Loddiges filled two sturdy cases with a mix of ferns and grasses and sent them on the exposed deck of a ship to Sydney where they arrived in perfect condition. The cases were refilled and returned with the plants Loddiges collected in November 1834.

Ward published the results of his experiments in *On the Growth of Plants in Closely Glazed Cases* in 1842, by which time he had already convinced his friend Sir William Hooker of their usefulness. Hooker became the first official director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in 1841, and his son, Joseph, was one of the first botanists to use the cases to send plants back to Kew from an expedition to New Zealand. By 1847 the Wardian case was in regular use by Kew, not always with complete success – 'I now call Ward's cases 'Ward's coffins!' bemoaned Joseph Hooker after losing a badly packed a consignment of plants – but successful enough that Sir William Hooker reported that in just 15 of years use, he had imported six times as many plants to Kew than had been imported in the previous century. Over time the cases were further developed to better protect the plants, by including crossed battens to hold the plants in place on rough crossings, and ventilation holes covered in perforated zinc to ▷

Left An illustration of an early Wardian case from Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward's book *On the Growth of Plants in Closely Glazed Cases,* first published in 1842. The Wardian case was arguably the most significant horticultural invention of the 19th century. It played a fundamental role in the development of international trade and the British economy, making it possible to transplant commercially significant plants from their native habitats and introduce them to cultivation for new countries.





▷ keep out rodents, and Kew continued to use Wardian cases up until 1962.

Many familiar garden plants first travelled to this country in a Wardian case, but its use didn't just change the look of our gardens. By allowing the transport of foods and cash crops the case transformed our diets and helped shape our economy. The banana from which the seedless Cavendish banana was developed was carried to Chatsworth in a Wardian case. In 1848 the Scottish botanist Robert Fortune used Wardian cases to smuggle more than 20,000 *Camellia sinensis* plants out of China to establish tea plantations in India and bring an end to the Chinese monopoly on tea. Twelve years later the English geographer Sir Clements Markham smuggled *Cinchona officinalis* shrubs out of South America in Wardian cases to establish plantations in British colonies. The quinine produced from the bark of these *Cinchona officinalis* was instrumental in the expansion of the British Empire, as it enabled Europeans to live in areas where malaria was

Top left Ward's largest closed cabinet was a fern house filled with exotic plants, which he built in the garden of his house in Clapham.

Left London's Great Exhibition of 1851 included a Wardian case with a plant that allegedly had not been watered in 18 years.

UNIVERSAL HISTORY ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES; FLORILEGIUS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

LONDON'S HORTICULTURAL HERITAGE

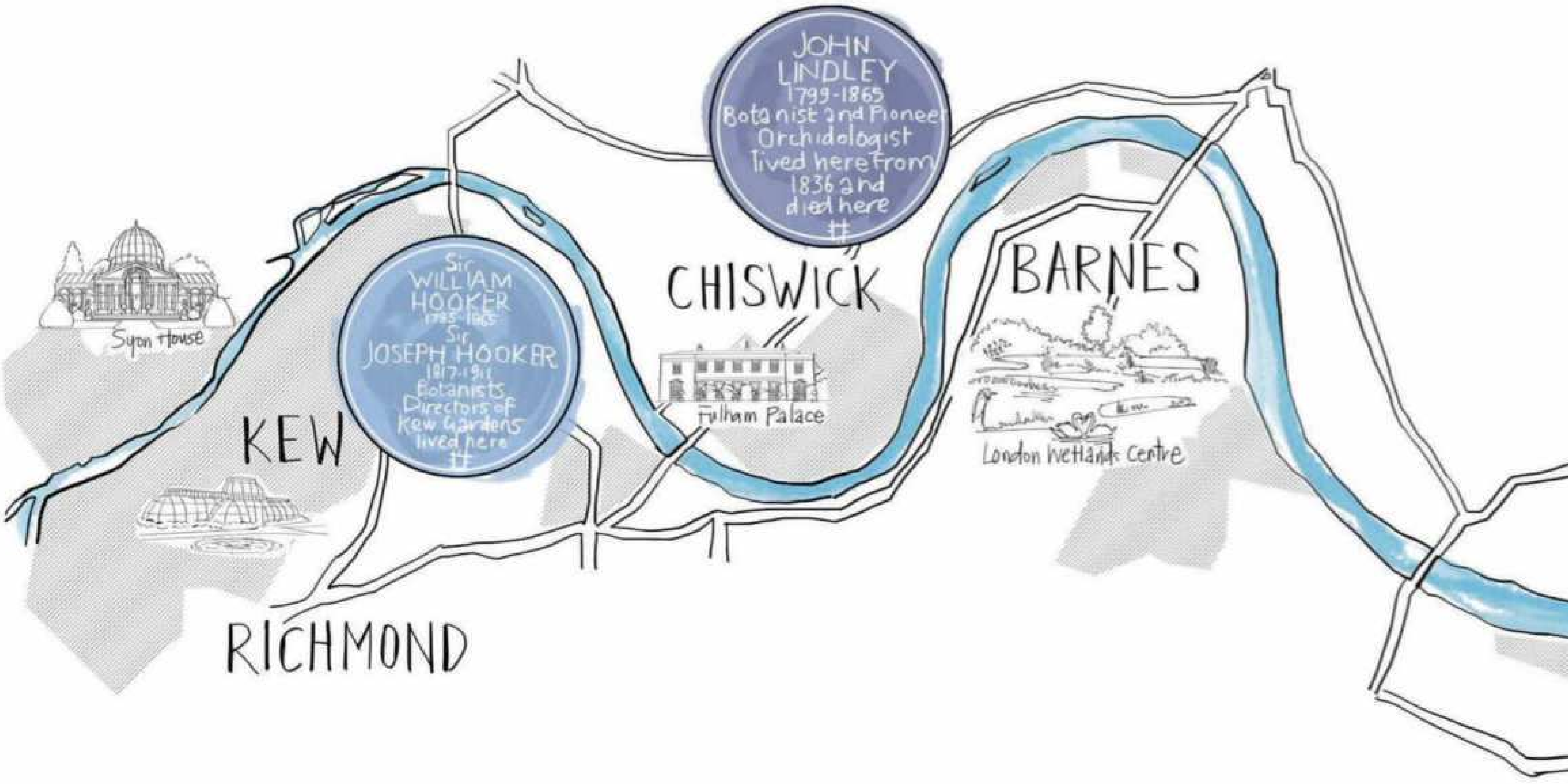
Ward's London house at 7 Wellclose Square has long since been demolished but there are many other addresses across the city that have played their part in shaping horticultural history that can still be seen today

49 Kew Green, Kew

Home to **Sir William Hooker** (1785-1865) and his son **Sir Joseph Hooker** (1817-1911). Both were botanists and were respectively the first and second directors of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Sir William was a friend of Ward's.

Bedford House, Acton Green

The plant hunter, orchidologist and author **John Lindley** (1799-1865) lived here from 1836 until his death. Lindley was the director of the Chelsea Physic Garden and the first professor of botany at the University of London.

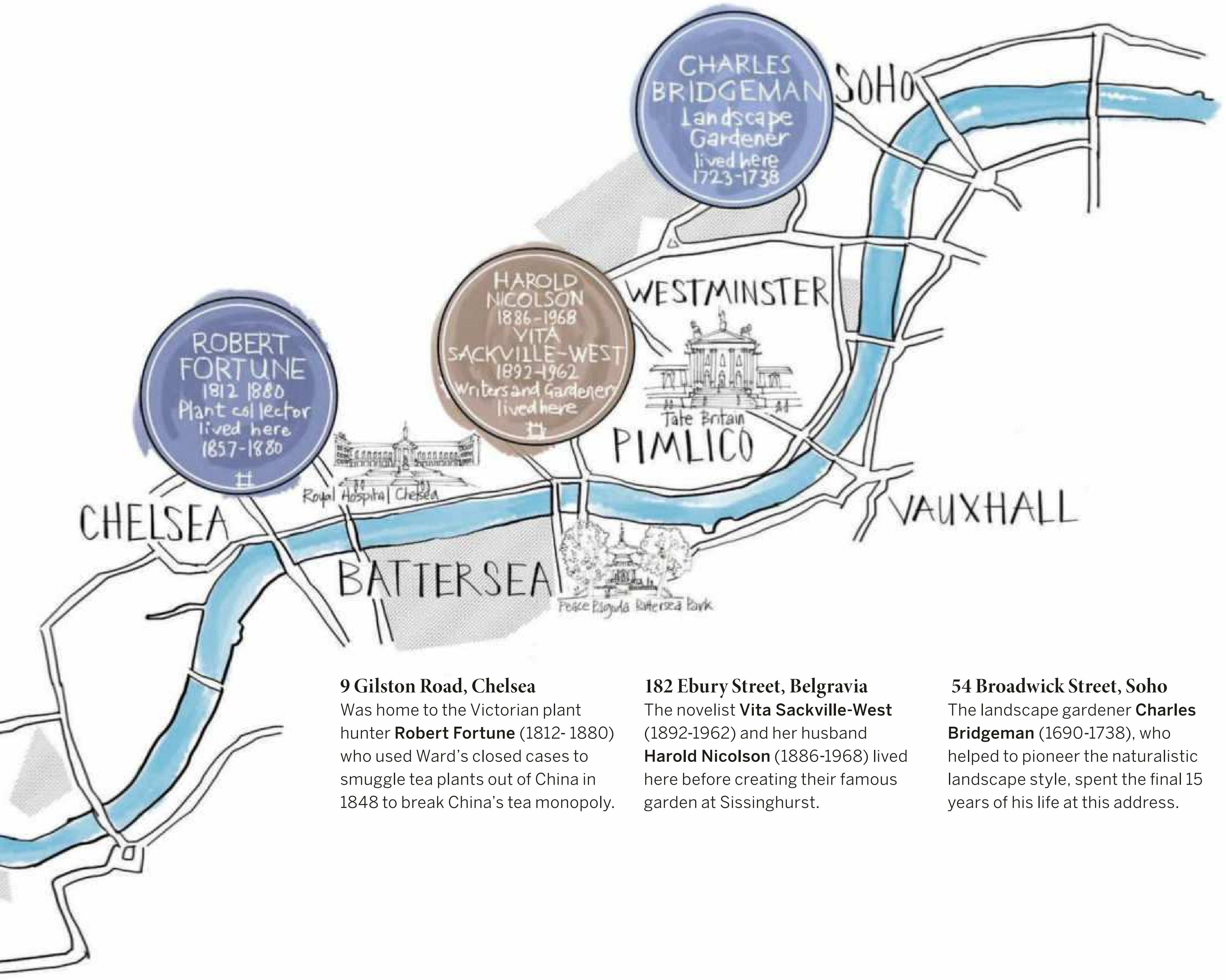

JOHN LINDLEY 1799-1865 Botanist and Pioneer Orchidologist lived here from 1836 and died here
Syon House
Sir WILLIAM HOOKER 1785-1865 Sir JOSEPH HOOKER 1817-1911 Botanists Directors of Kew Gardens lived here
CHISWICK
BARNES
Fulham Palace
London Wetlands Centre
KEW
RICHMOND

rife. In fact, without quinine, argues the historian Daniel R Headrick in *The Tools of Empire*, 'European colonialism would have been almost impossible in Africa, and much costlier elsewhere in the tropics.'

As well as the practical cases used in the field, ornamental versions of the Wardian case were made, which allowed even those on relatively modest incomes to bring some exotic greenery into their homes, and helped fuel the Victorian crazes for ferns and orchids (first brought to the UK in a Wardian case). But despite the cases' popularity, Ward made little money from his invention, and continued to practice as a doctor in the East End before retiring to Clapham. His passion for ferns never left him, and in the garden of his home in Clapham Rise he finally achieved his fernery in a large, closed glasshouse, described in an 1851 magazine article as 'a representation (in miniature of course) of a tropical forest'. When he died in 1868, his fern herbarium contained around 25,000 specimens. ❑

Right Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward in around 1866. His accidental invention gained him the respect of botanists. He was elected a Fellow of both the Royal Society and the Linnean Society and Sir William Hooker named the moss genus *Wardia* in his honour.

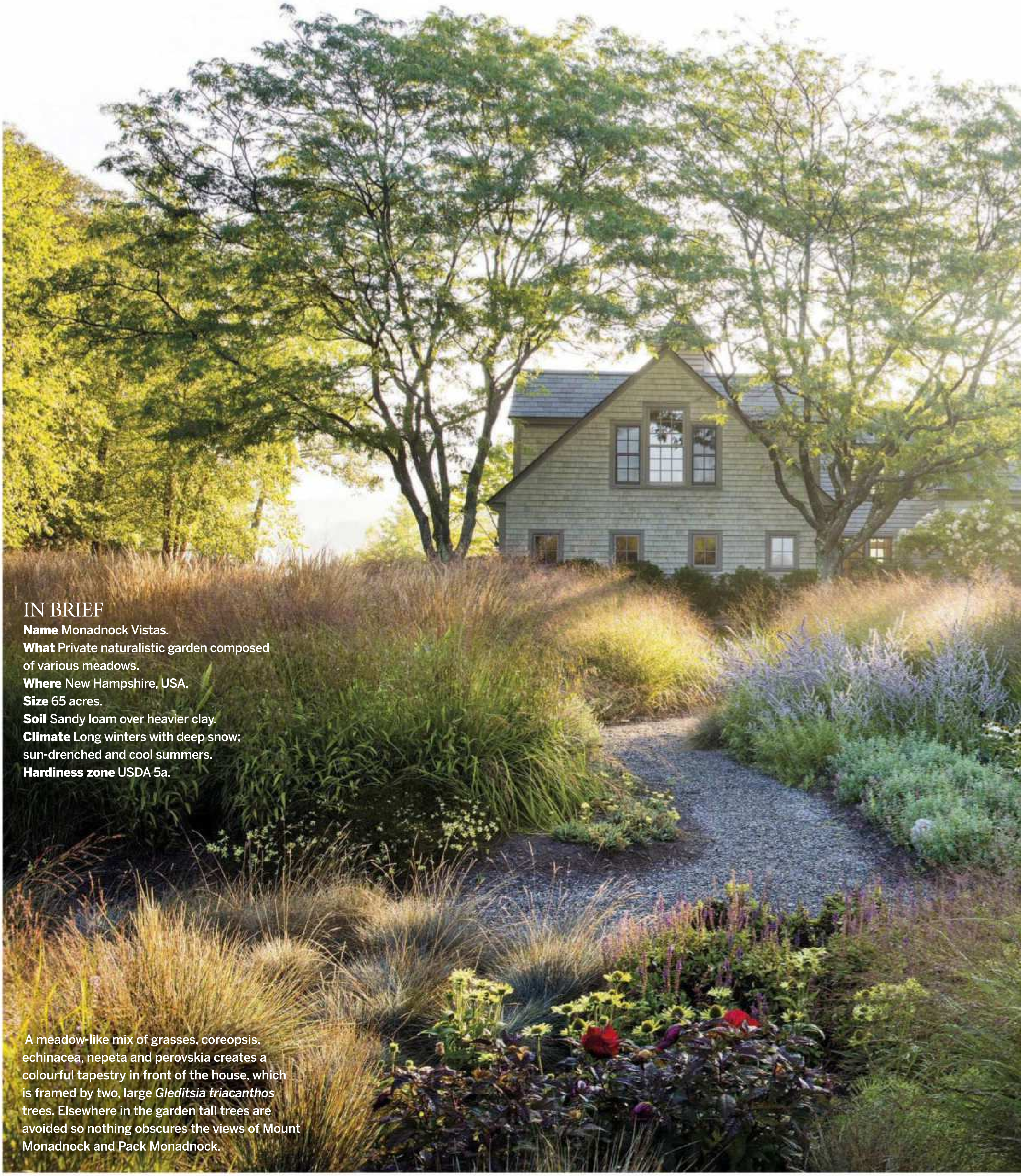
THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO


CHARLES BRIDGEMAN Landscape Gardener lived here 1723-1738
SOHO
HAROLD NICOLSON 1886-1968 VITA SACKVILLE-WEST 1892-1962 Writers and Gardeners lived here
WESTMINSTER
ROBERT FORTUNE 1812 1880 Plant collector lived here 1857-1880
Tate Britain
PIMLICO
Royal Hospital Chelsea
VAUXHALL
CHELSEA
BATTERSEA
Peace Pagoda Battersea Park

9 Gilston Road, Chelsea
Was home to the Victorian plant hunter **Robert Fortune** (1812- 1880) who used Ward's closed cases to smuggle tea plants out of China in 1848 to break China's tea monopoly.

182 Ebury Street, Belgravia
The novelist **Vita Sackville-West** (1892-1962) and her husband **Harold Nicolson** (1886-1968) lived here before creating their famous garden at Sissinghurst.

54 Broadwick Street, Soho
The landscape gardener **Charles Bridgeman** (1690-1738), who helped to pioneer the naturalistic landscape style, spent the final 15 years of his life at this address.



IN BRIEF

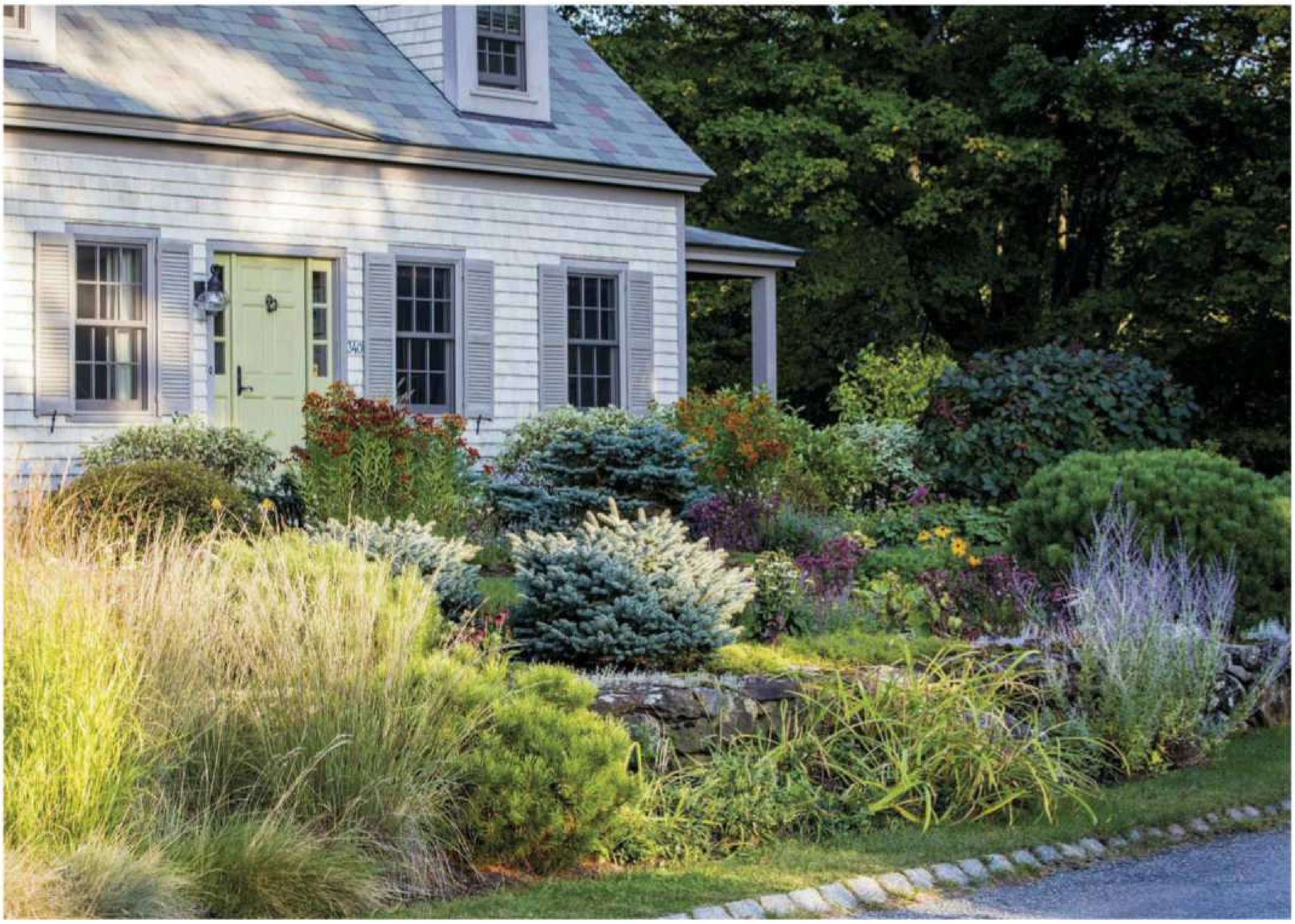
Name Monadnock Vistas.
What Private naturalistic garden composed of various meadows.
Where New Hampshire, USA.
Size 65 acres.
Soil Sandy loam over heavier clay.
Climate Long winters with deep snow; sun-drenched and cool summers.
Hardiness zone USDA 5a.

A meadow-like mix of grasses, coreopsis, echinacea, nepeta and perovskia creates a colourful tapestry in front of the house, which is framed by two, large *Gleditsia triacanthos* trees. Elsewhere in the garden tall trees are avoided so nothing obscures the views of Mount Monadnock and Pack Monadnock.

HARMONIOUS COLOUR

When Sharon and Brad Malt felt the garden around their New Hampshire weekend home needed a revamp they called in ZEN Associates to create a low-maintenance meadow that would sing with colour

WORDS **TOVAH MARTIN** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLAIRE TAKACS**



Winters in New Hampshire can be long and cold, and when Sharon and Brad Malt first looked round the house that has now become their weekend bolthole from Boston, its garden was waist-deep in snow. When finally they got a glimpse of what lay beneath the snow they were a little disappointed. But no matter, they loved the house and its location, surrounded by mountain hiking trails, and besides when they first bought the house creating a garden seemed less important than providing open spaces for their two sons to play in. Eventually they might think about creating a garden for themselves, but not yet.

But the couple's dream of a garden in New Hampshire never went away and as their sons got older it became a more realistic possibility. In the Beacon Hill district of Boston, where the couple live during the week, Sharon joined the Beacon Hill Garden Club, and while sitting in club meetings with other garden enthusiasts, the talk of pollinators and creating wildlife-friendly habitats only intensified her longing for something other than grass-covered playing fields. "Suddenly, I needed flowers," she says.

Sharon also serves on the committees of several cultural, environmental and horticultural organisations in Boston, and through her involvement with one of these she met Peter White a partner in the Boston-based design and landscape architecture practice ZEN Associates. Sharon and Brad liked ZEN's landscape style and asked the practice to come up with a design for the area around the guest cottage of their New Hampshire home. Then a few years later in 2000 they invited the practice back to come up with an overall plan for the entire garden. The plan ZEN came up with transformed much of the 65 acres into a series of sprawling meadows that flow with ornamental grasses and swathes of loose, airy, perennials.

Paths now weave through the meadows, linking the various areas of the garden together and echo the network of hiking trails that surround the house. The 90m playing field the ▷

Turn to page 84 to continue

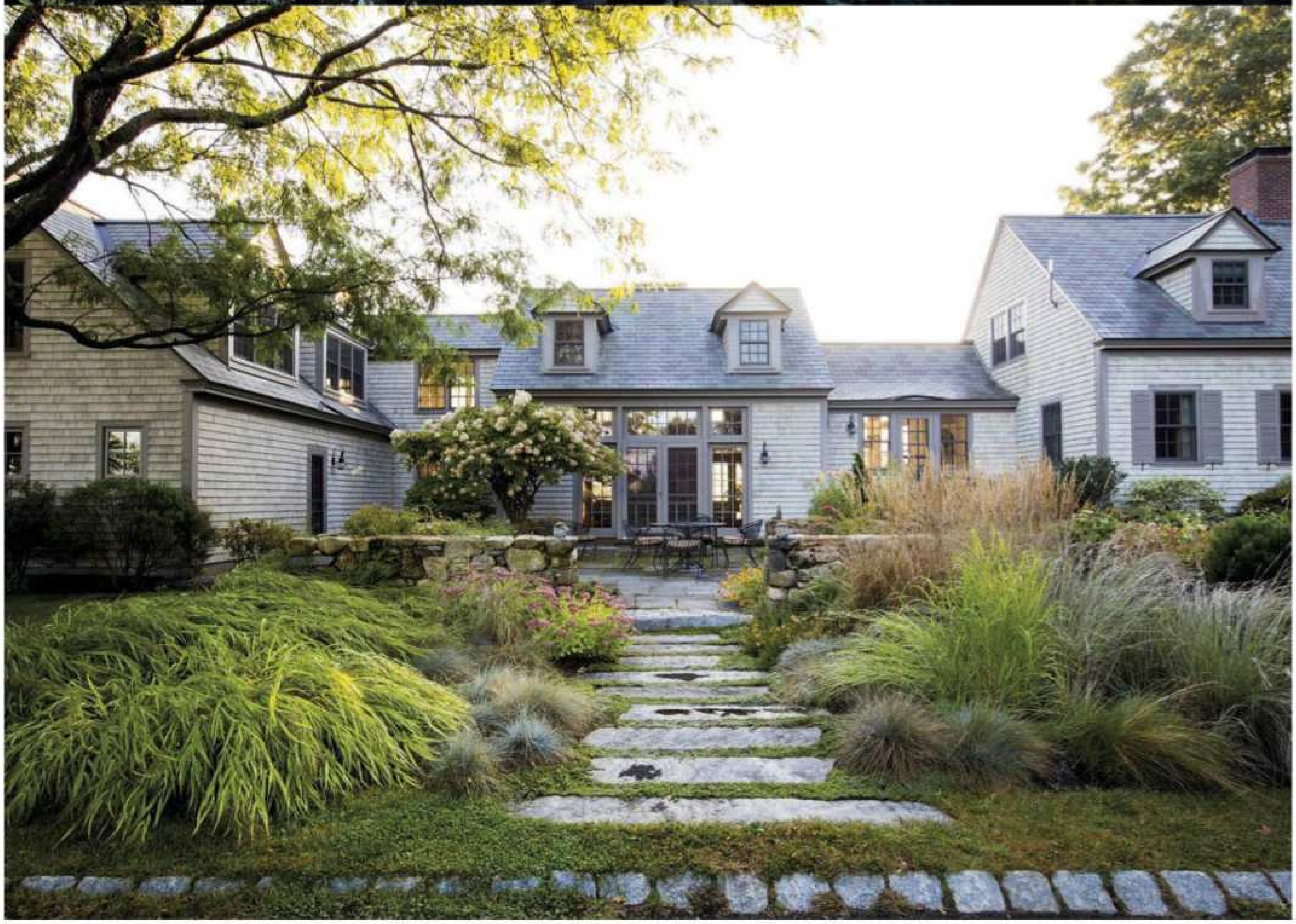
Clockwise from above

Close to the house a selection of shrubs and perennials, including *Picea pungens* 'Montgomery', *Pinus mugo*, *Cotinus* 'Grace', *Eutrochium purpureum* and *Perovskia atriplicifolia*, create a rich mix of colours and forms.

A large *Hydrangea paniculata* dominates the terrace in front of the house where in summer the Malts grow peonies and roses. In September echinacea and sedums add colour.

The stone wall in front of the terrace was designed to stand just above the planting of *Festuca glauca* 'Elijah Blue'. Lining the path in front is *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Nippon' along with several cultivars of *Hakonechloa*.

WE SIT ON THE TERRACE AND LISTEN TO A CRESCENDO OF BIRDS

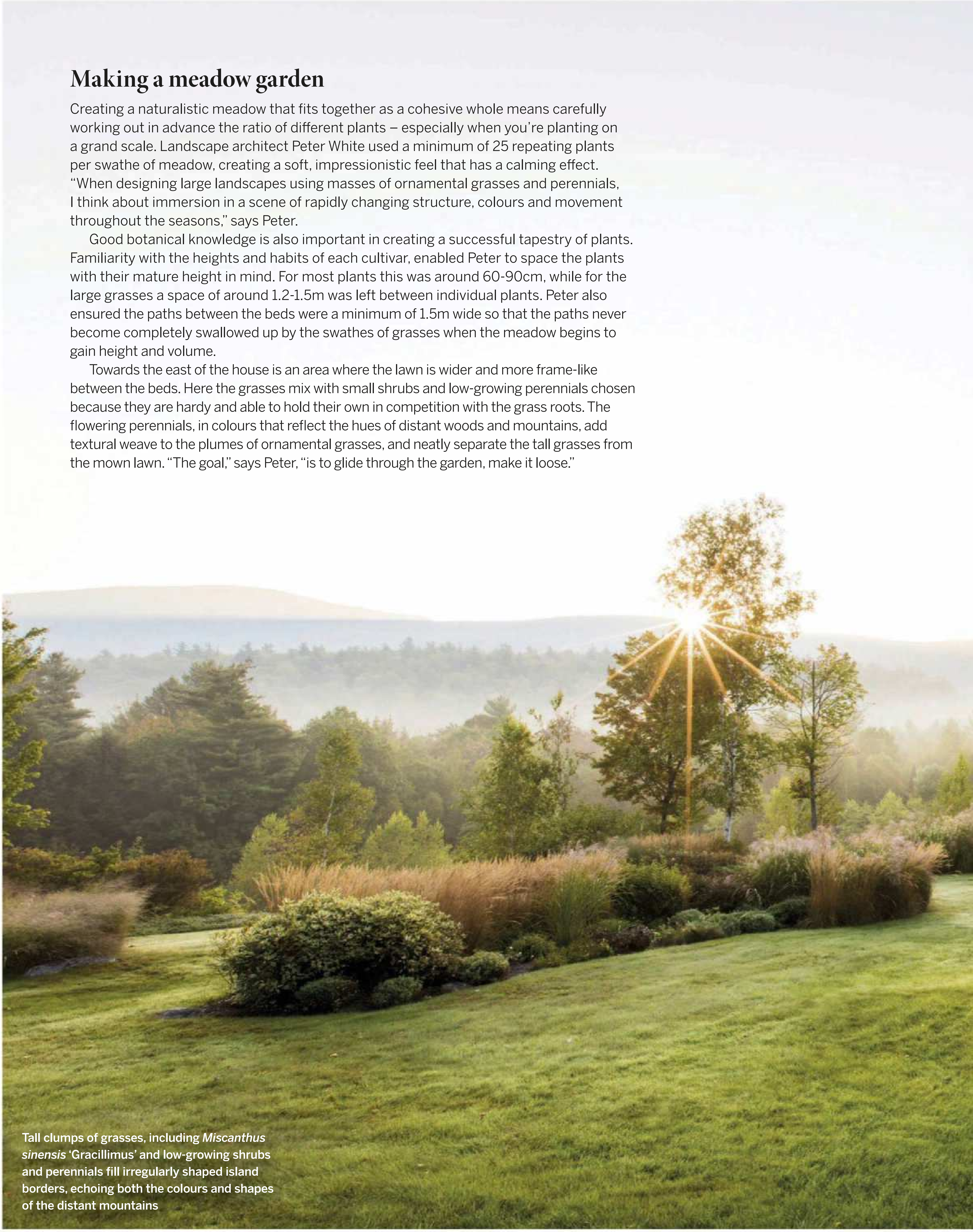


Making a meadow garden

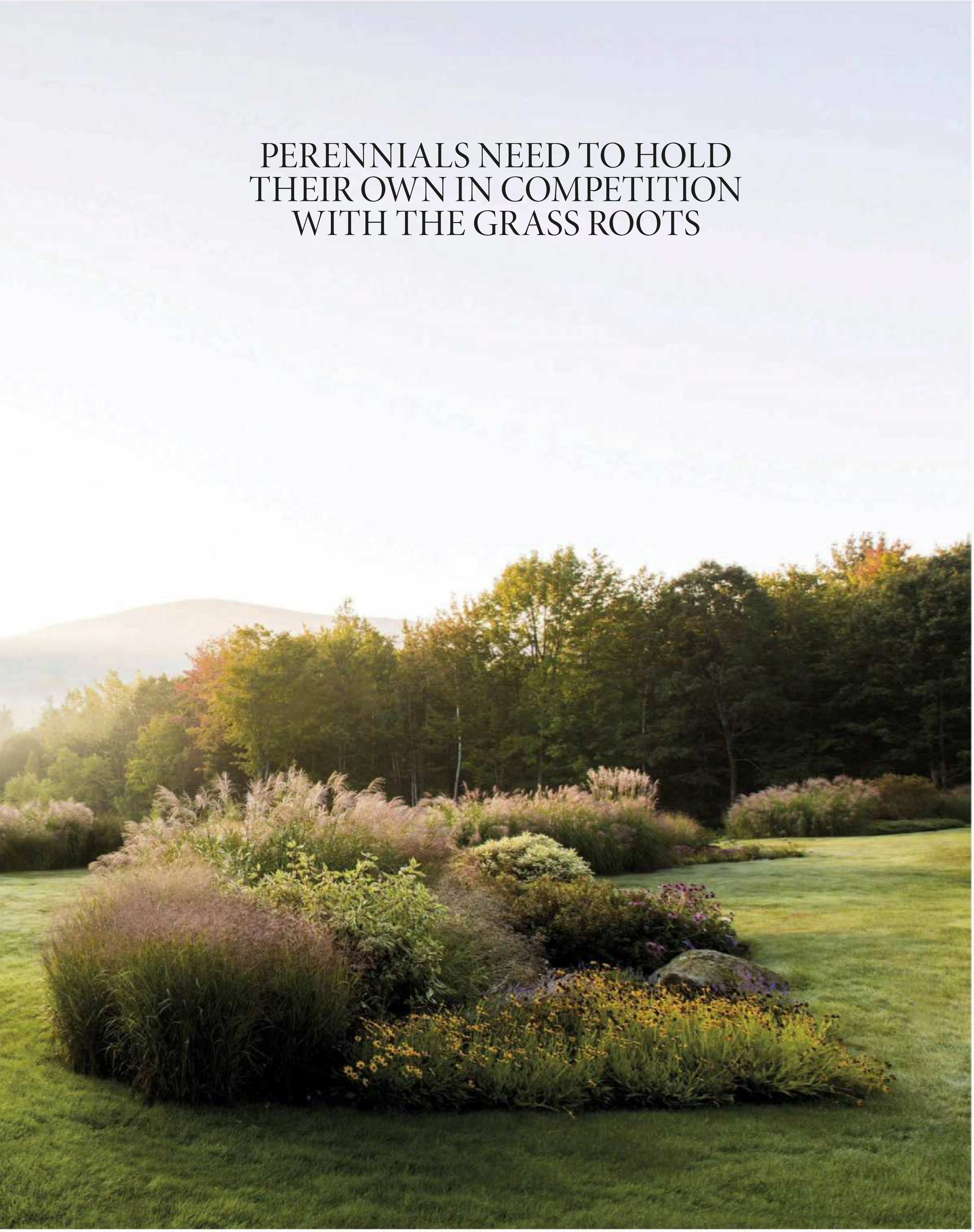
Creating a naturalistic meadow that fits together as a cohesive whole means carefully working out in advance the ratio of different plants – especially when you're planting on a grand scale. Landscape architect Peter White used a minimum of 25 repeating plants per swathe of meadow, creating a soft, impressionistic feel that has a calming effect. "When designing large landscapes using masses of ornamental grasses and perennials, I think about immersion in a scene of rapidly changing structure, colours and movement throughout the seasons," says Peter.

Good botanical knowledge is also important in creating a successful tapestry of plants. Familiarity with the heights and habits of each cultivar, enabled Peter to space the plants with their mature height in mind. For most plants this was around 60-90cm, while for the large grasses a space of around 1.2-1.5m was left between individual plants. Peter also ensured the paths between the beds were a minimum of 1.5m wide so that the paths never become completely swallowed up by the swathes of grasses when the meadow begins to gain height and volume.

Towards the east of the house is an area where the lawn is wider and more frame-like between the beds. Here the grasses mix with small shrubs and low-growing perennials chosen because they are hardy and able to hold their own in competition with the grass roots. The flowering perennials, in colours that reflect the hues of distant woods and mountains, add textural weave to the plumes of ornamental grasses, and neatly separate the tall grasses from the mown lawn. "The goal," says Peter, "is to glide through the garden, make it loose."



Tall clumps of grasses, including *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus' and low-growing shrubs and perennials fill irregularly shaped island borders, echoing both the colours and shapes of the distant mountains



PERENNIALS NEED TO HOLD THEIR OWN IN COMPETITION WITH THE GRASS ROOTS

PATHS WEAVE THROUGH THE MEADOWS, LINKING THE VARIOUS AREAS OF THE GARDEN TOGETHER

▷ Malts had originally laid out for their sons was retained as an open space that the family could use for star gazing and family get-togethers, but is now largely hidden from the house by swathes of meadow grass, which are planted in drifts that become more dense the further you get from the house. As the grasses change in colour and height throughout the season, the feel of the meadow evolves. "But they always feel like one fabric," says Sharon.

To tie all the areas together ZEN built stone walls that are just tall enough to remain visible above the panicums, calamagrostis, pennisetums and miscanthus when they reach their full height in autumn. In front of the house an uninspiring collection of plants near the front door was replaced with a selection of shrubs and perennials, including *Spiraea* x *vanhouttei* 'Renaissance', *Vaccinium corymbosum*, *Cotinus* 'Grace' and *Hydrangea quercifolia* that link with the planting around the stone terrace the family love to use on summer evenings.

Behind the house a pond, complete with stream and waterfall, was built to improve a damp, boggy space, and surrounded with natives, such as iris, *Phlox subulata* and *Liatris spicata*. Elsewhere on the property the soil was fertile and well-drained and needed little amending thanks to the sandy loam on site.

Maintenance for the meadow is fairly minimal. Before the snow arrives in winter, Brad and Sharon cut back the ornamental grasses, and divide them every few years, which the both agree is far less labour-intensive than maintaining the previous lawns. And the new meadows have one other advantage for the grasses for the family: they have attracted a host of wildlife that brings the garden alive with sound. "It's so different from the city here," says Sharon. "We sit on the terrace and listen to a crescendo of birds."

At this time of year, it is often dark by the time family arrive at the house on a Friday evening. Even so they like to head out into the meadows, and take some time to look up at the stars and soak up the harmonious sounds of the meadow. ❑

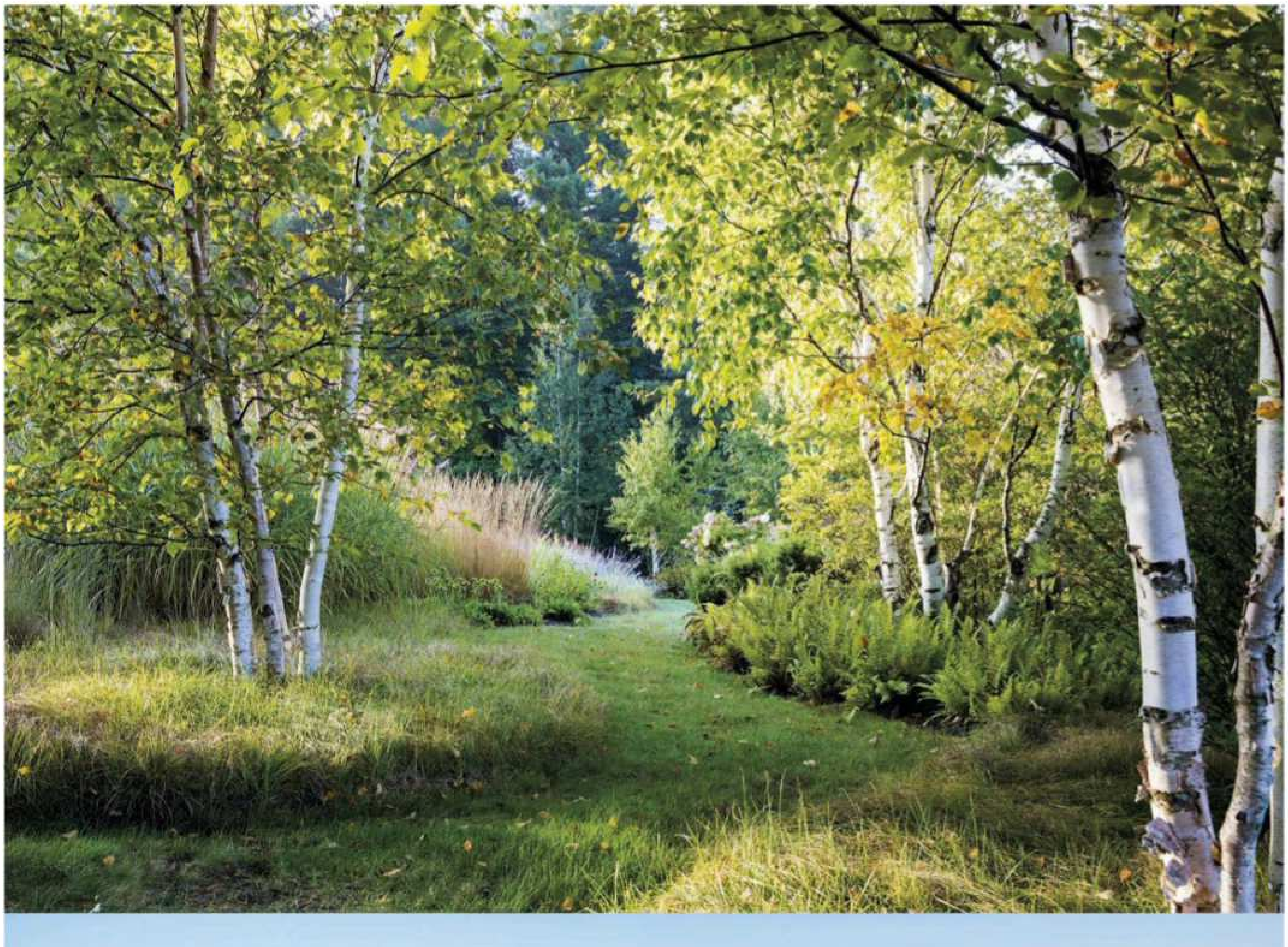
Clockwise from above

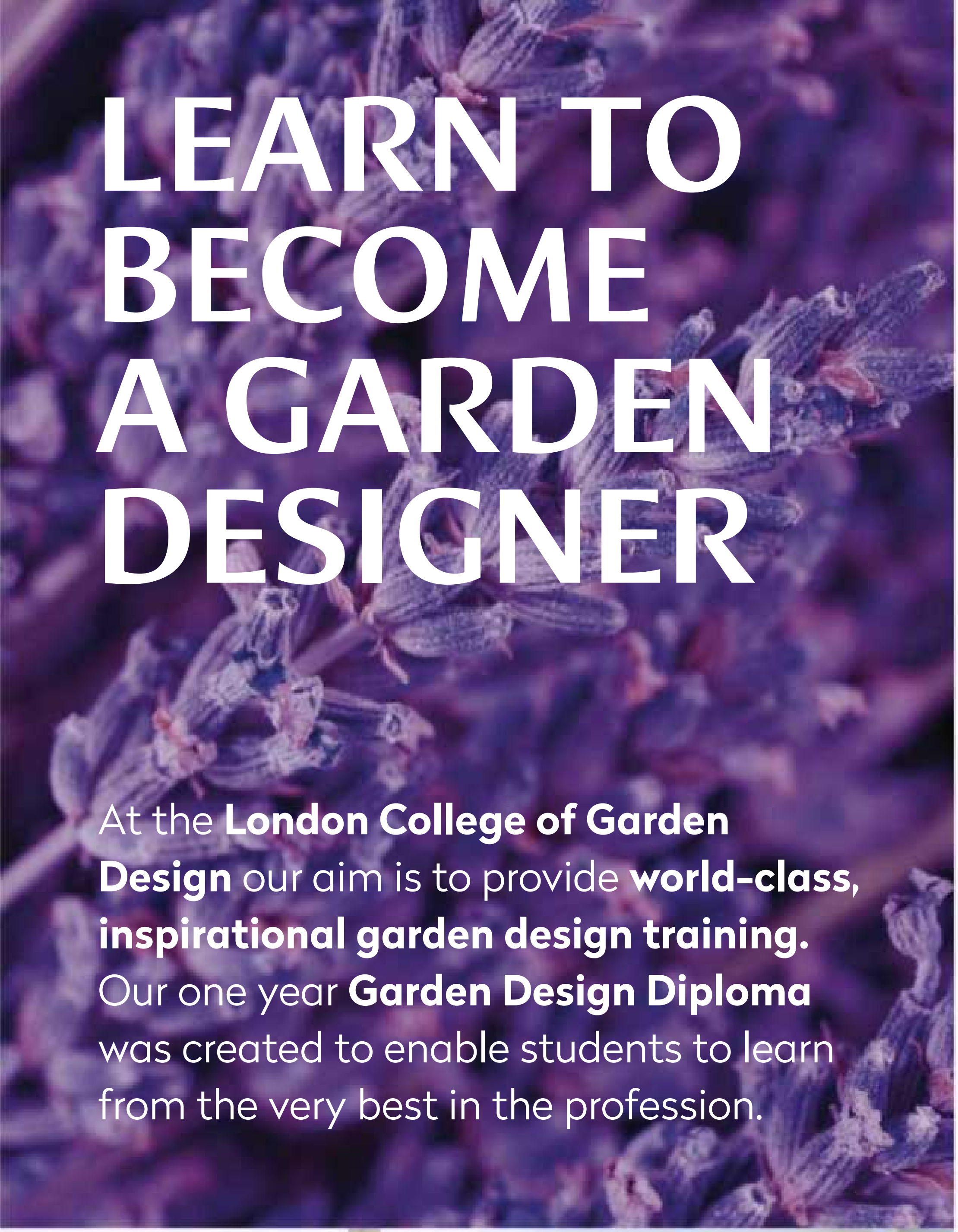
Tall *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Graziella' and *Miscanthus sinensis* var. *condensatus* 'Cabaret' overlook a lawn close to the house.

A grass pathway winds it way down to a barn through a grove of birch trees. Islands of unmown grass around the trees create a link to the ornamental grasses in the meadows beyond.

The mix of *Calamagrostis* x *acutiflora*, *Panicum virgatum* and *Chasmanthium latifolium* becomes more dense the further you move from the house, in places almost covering the gravel path that leads to the former playing field.

USEFUL INFORMATION
Find out more about ZEN Associates at **zenassociates.com**





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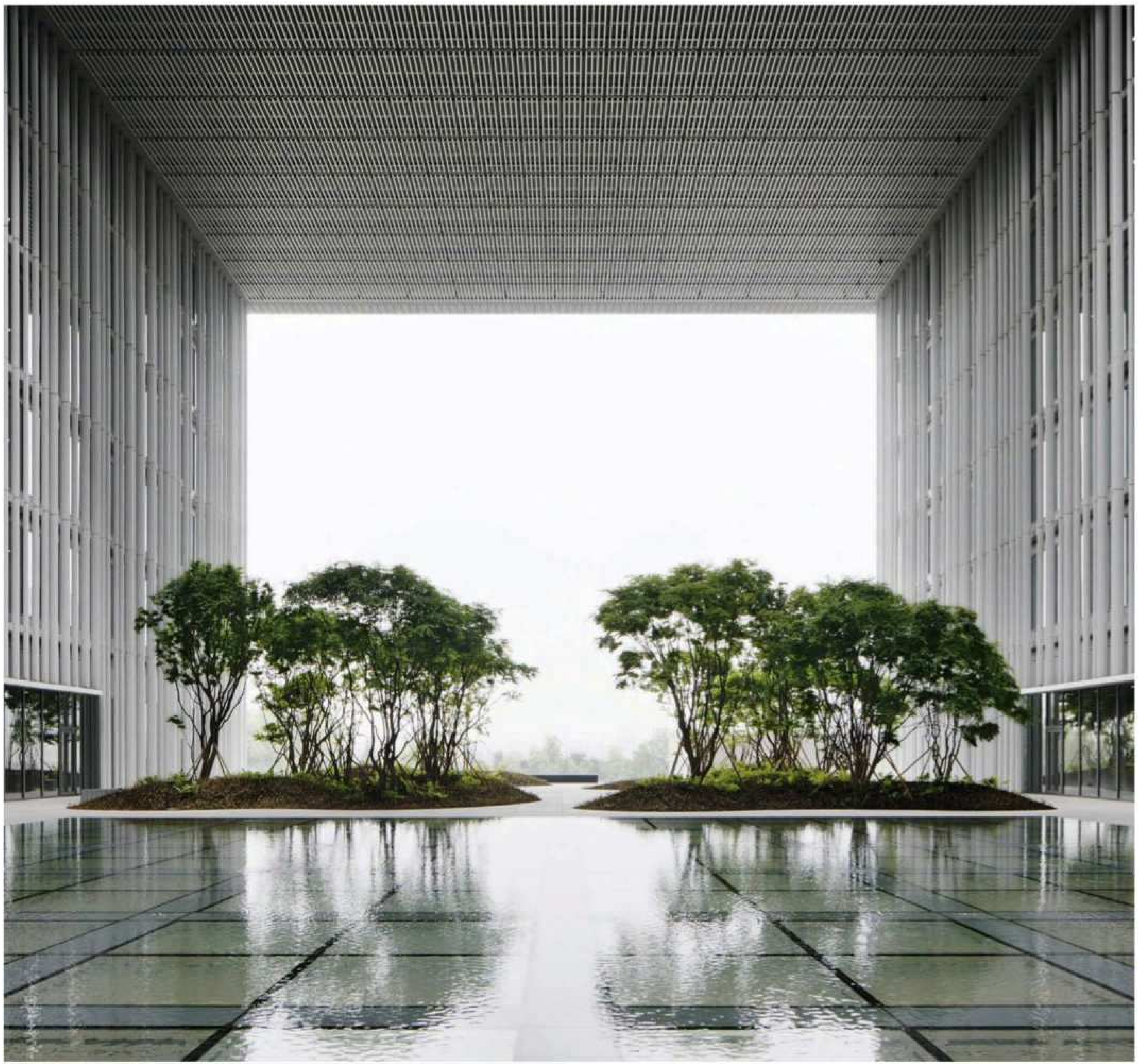
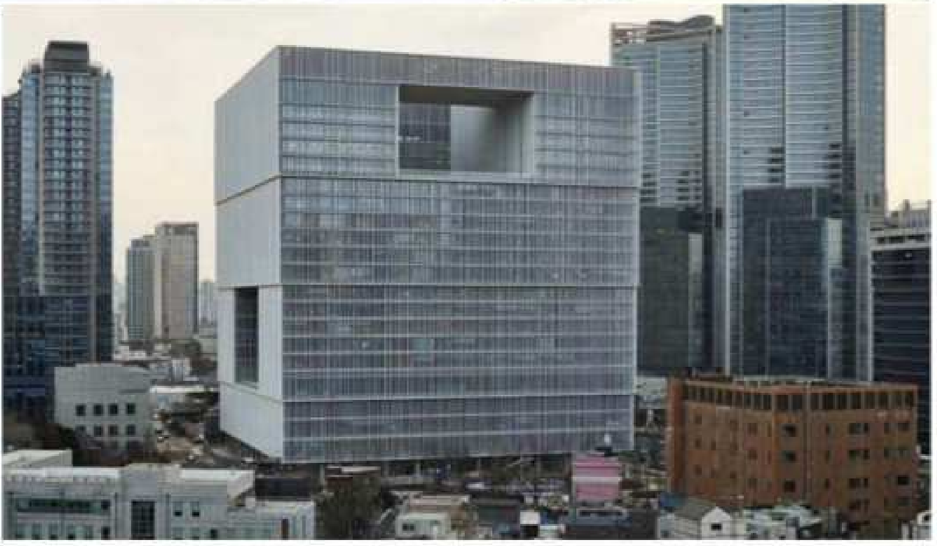


OPENING OUT

Hanging gardens have taken off around the world as a way of bringing greenery into densely built up cities. In the heart of Seoul, the Berlin-based David Chipperfield Architects has designed the high-rise headquarters of Amorepacific, Korea's largest beauty company, around a central void to maximise light and ventilation. In addition, three large openings in the sides of the building, planted with soft mounds of multi-stem Japanese maples, underplanted with a mix of local species, create high level garden spaces with glass balustrades that allow uninterrupted views across the city. The open spaces have been landscaped by Korean landscape architects SEO-AHN to connect the heart of the building to an adjacent pocket park. **davidchipperfield.com**



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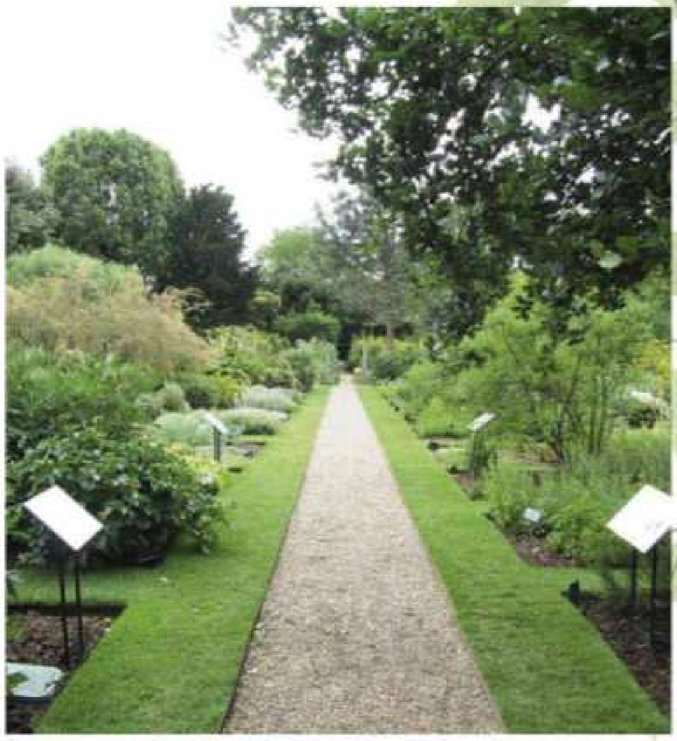

Garden of Medicinal Plants – Chelsea Physic Garden Photo: R Alexander

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COMPILED BY ANNIE GATTI

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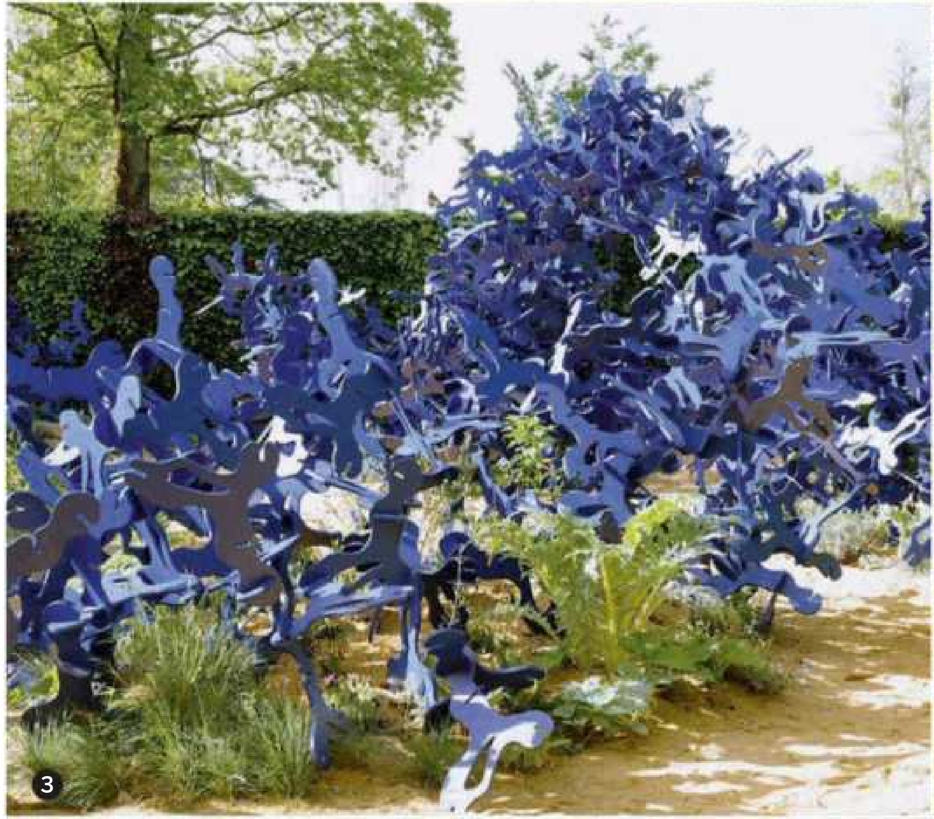
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ESCARGO COLLECTIF. EDMUND SUMNER. © ÉRIC SANDER. LEPERE STUDIO

① GARDENS OF PEACE

An ambitious project to mark the end of the First World War with 15 gardens opens this month. Organised by Art & Jardins Hauts-de-France and the Great War Centenary Mission, the project, Jardins de La Paix, will see designers from countries whose soldiers died in the conflict create gardens close to some of the war's battles. At Vimy, site of one of the major battles to involve Canadian troops, the Canadian collective, Escargo has designed a garden (pictured) that takes its inspiration from Canada's Boreal forest, and which will feature white blooms, symbolising peace, around pale-grey trunks. **artetjardins-hdf.com/jardins-de-la-paix**

② AGA KHAN CENTRE

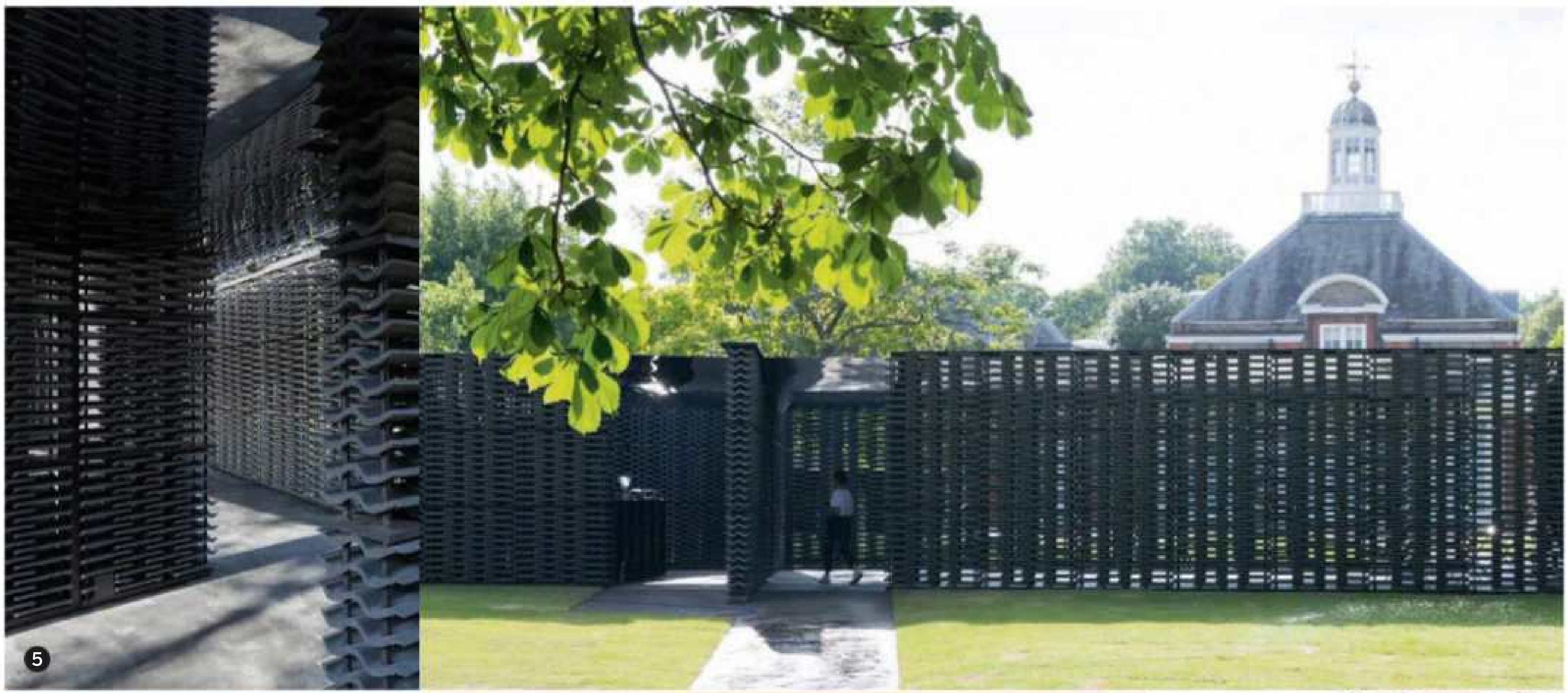
Six gardens, courtyards and terraces inspired by Islamic cultures from around the world will form part of the new Aga Khan Centre that opens in London this month. On the roof is the Garden of Life by American landscape architect Madison Cox, which has a central water channel framed by fastigiate yews, Persian ironwood and medlars, and walls smothered in jasmine and chocolate vine. On the ninth floor, the Garden of Light (pictured), designed by Nelson Byrd Woltz, features a grid of *Magnolia x loebneri* 'Merrill' and patterned screens, inscribed with extracts from the Qu'ran, that create a clever interplay of changing light. **agakhancentre.org.uk**

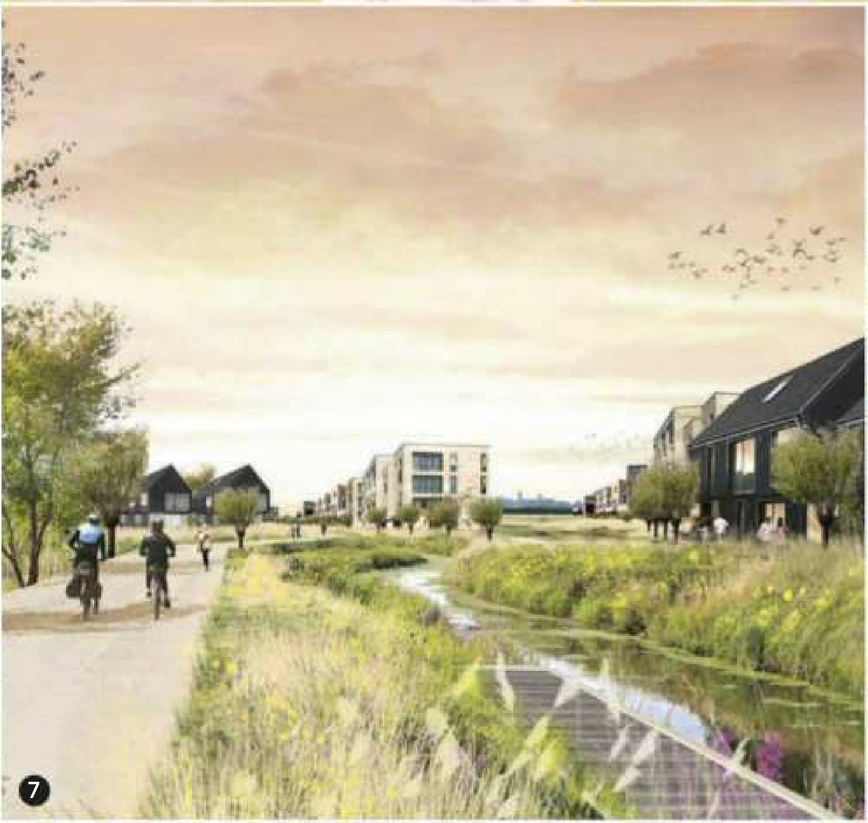
③ CHAUMONT

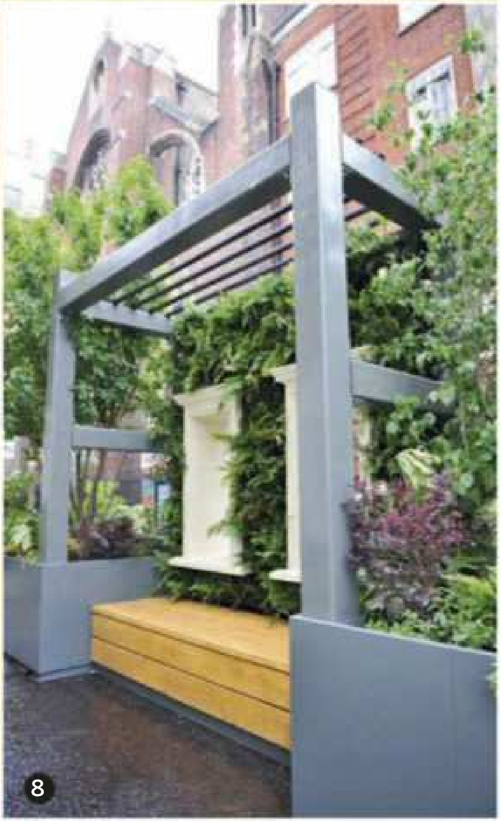
Jardins de la Pensée or Gardens of Thought, is the theme of the 27th edition of the Domaine de Chaumont-sur-Loire International Garden Festival. Among this year's prize-winning gardens is Livre de Sable, or Sand Book, garden (pictured) by the architecture collective Moonwalklocal and landscape architecture collective Paysagistes Sans Frontières. The garden creates a desert-like walk, interspersed with architectural blue bushes. The blue is the colour of the garments worn by the men of Chinguetti, in northern Mauritania, who protect precious Arabic manuscripts in Mauritania's desert libraries. Until 4 November. **domaine-chaumont.fr**

④ APLD AWARDS

Californian designer Margie Grace of Grace Design Associates has won Designer of the Year at the APLD 2018 awards for her drought-tolerant garden in Montecito, California. The garden, known as Sycamore Canyon, uses wide flat stones to link a series of terraces from the front gate to the back of the house where an expanse of lawn and concrete paths beneath mature trees have been replaced with a series of distinct gravelled and terraced spaces. Low-maintenance drifts of perennial grasses create a relaxed look while pots with dramatic plantings provide spikes of colour and texture. **gracedesignassociates.com**







⑤ SERPENTINE PAVILION

The internal courtyards that are a familiar feature of residential houses in her native Mexico has inspired Frida Escobedo's design for this year's Serpentine Pavilion. The walls are made from a latticework of wavy concrete roofing tiles that allow light and the breeze to filter through to the enclosed courtyard, formed of two overlapping rectangles. Inside, a curving mirrored ceiling reflects a shallow triangular pool of water, while the movement of the sun creates further plays of light and shadow. The Pavilion is by the Serpentine Gallery in London's Kensington Gardens until 7 October. **serpentinegalleries.org**

⑥ HORNIMAN MUSEUM GARDEN

A new Grasslands Garden, devised by James Hitchmough, has opened at the Horniman Museum in London. The 400 square metre naturalistic scheme features plants that are currently under threat. Two rectangular beds, cut through with a single diagonal path, have been planted with North American species, such as *Silphium terebinthinaceum*, *Eryngium yuccifolium* and *Asclepias tuberosa* on the outer sections, and in the centre South African species, including *Dierama pulcherrimum*, *Kniphofia uvaria* and *Berkheya purpurea*, have been planted directly into gravel. **horniman.ac.uk**

⑦ CAR-FREE TOWN

Plans have been revealed for a new town that will have 4,500 homes and plenty of parks and shared spaces with naturalistic planting, but no cars. Masterplanned by LDA Design, Waterbeach, near Cambridge, draws on the landscape and patterns of the nearby Fens in its design. Planners hope to foster a strong sense of community in the town, which will be made up of a series of neighbourhoods, each with its own character and facilities, linked by car-free streets. There will spaces for community activities, such as vegetable growing and children's play, but cars will be restricted to the outer edges of housing areas. **lda-design.co.uk**

⑧ NEW HOME FOR CHELSEA GARDEN

Kate Gould's gold medal-winning Chelsea 2018 Wild West End garden, has been adapted and relocated to Old Quebec Street, just a stone's throw from Oxford Street in the heart of London's West End. A range of different sized bespoke stainless steel planters, containing the trees and plants, frame the pedestrian street and the enlarged fern walls set within large steel pergolas are now inset with wooden benches. The foliage-rich plants were chosen for their CO_2 absorption and resistance to air pollution and include *Acer ginnala*, *Cornus kousa*, *Crataegus laevigata* 'Paul's Scarlet' and *Heptacodium miconioides*.

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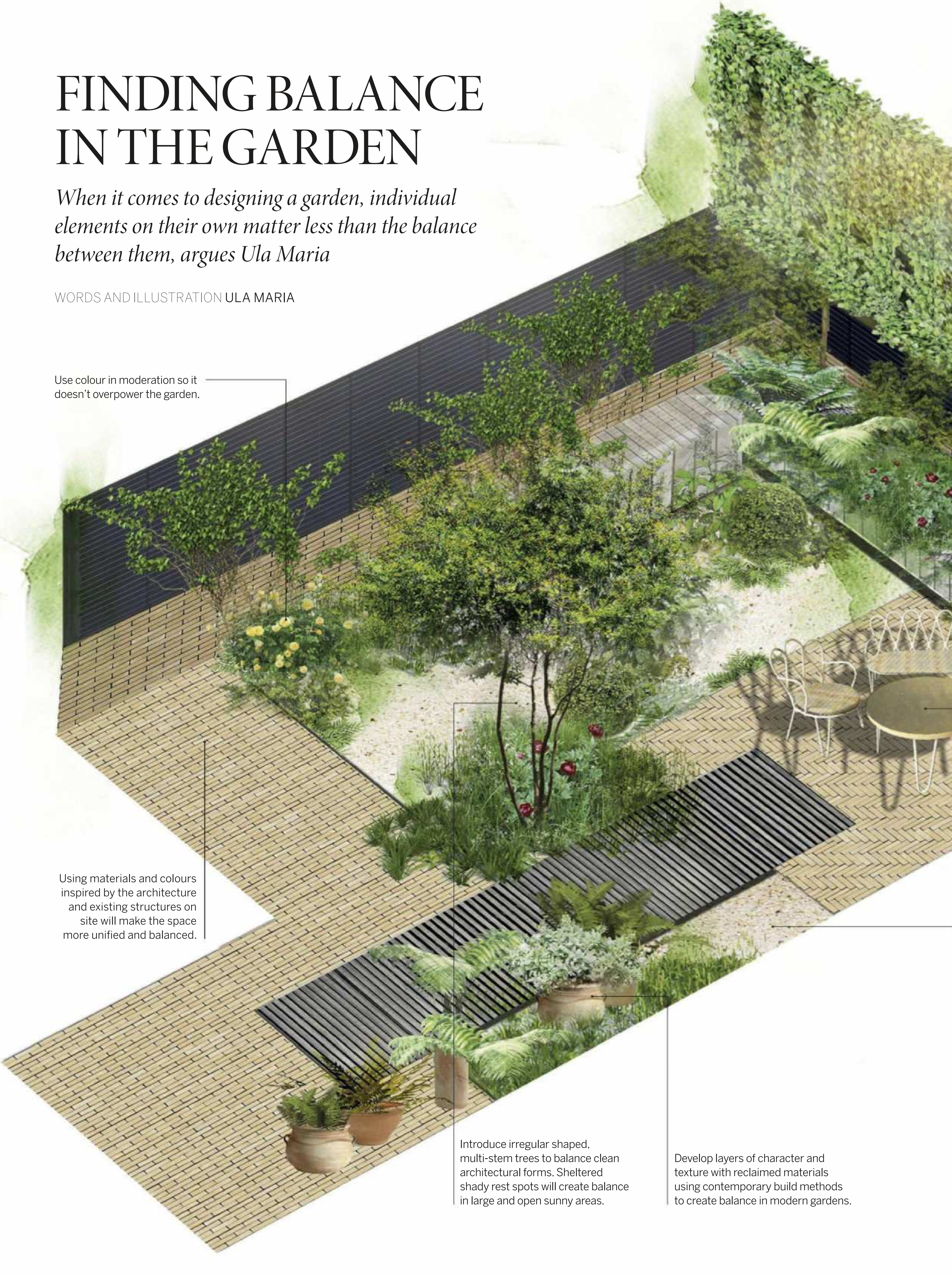
FINDING BALANCE IN THE GARDEN

When it comes to designing a garden, individual elements on their own matter less than the balance between them, argues Ula Maria

WORDS AND ILLUSTRATION **ULA MARIA**

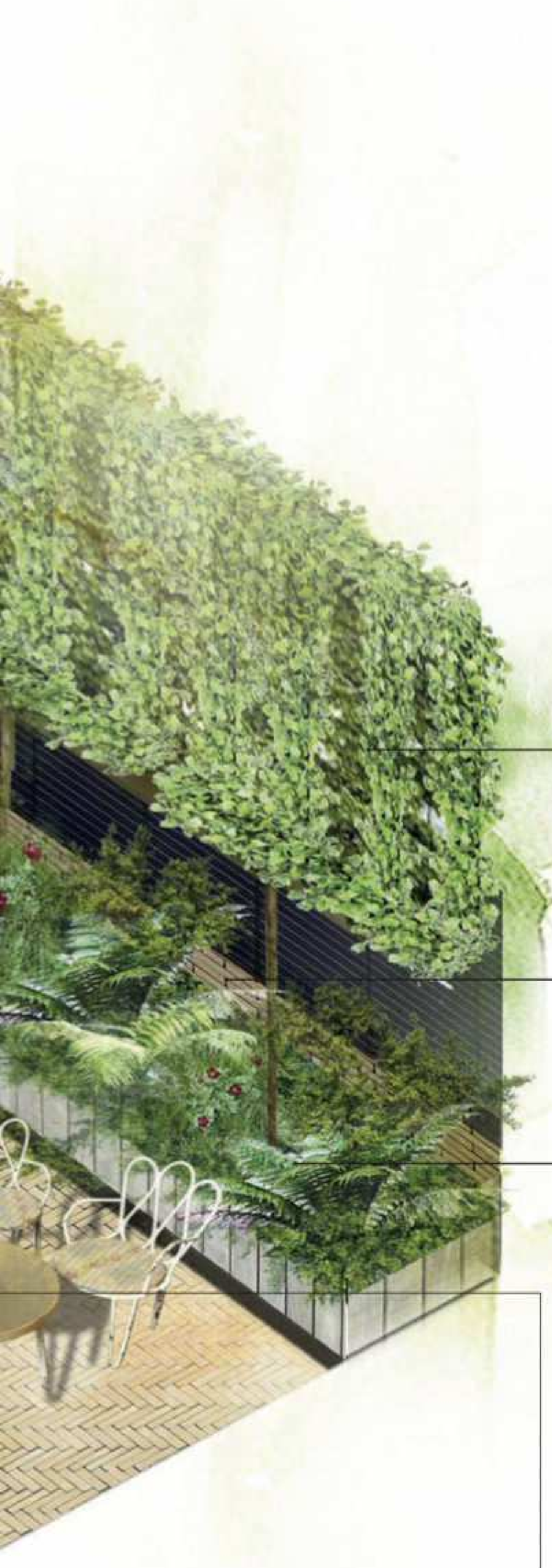


Use colour in moderation so it doesn't overpower the garden.

Using materials and colours inspired by the architecture and existing structures on site will make the space more unified and balanced.

Introduce irregular shaped, multi-stem trees to balance clean architectural forms. Sheltered shady rest spots will create balance in large and open sunny areas.

Develop layers of character and texture with reclaimed materials using contemporary build methods to create balance in modern gardens.



Pleached trees provide structure and can be used to improve the balance between hard and soft landscaping, without taking up too much room in a small garden.

Balance rich textures and colours of planting with plain and even garden backdrops or vice versa.

Raised planters create vertical interest and add depth to otherwise flat spaces.

Introduce changes in level to create multi-dimensional balance.

Colour doesn't always have to be introduced through planting. Colour balance can be created using furniture or characterful hard landscaping materials.

Ula Maria is an award-winning garden designer, landscape architect and illustrator. She was named the RHS Young Designer of the Year in 2017.

Garden design is such a monumental subject that it is near impossible to give a straightforward response when asked: How do you create a successful garden? Like art, gardens can be incredibly personal, subjective and self-expressive. Every time I design a garden, I find myself travelling back to when I was a student of Fine Art, standing behind my easel and carefully observing the composition laid out in front of the class. I used to contemplate the composition for what seemed like an age before I could comfortably dip my brush into the 'perfect' colour because at the time I believed the perfect colour did exist. As I have become braver in my colour choices, and less afraid of grouping and layering them, I have discovered that the perfect colour does not exist, or rather it is not one colour but the combination of colours that makes a successful painting; that balance is key. Likewise in the garden, even though we might be unsure about certain individual elements, if the overall balance is right, the space feels comfortable to be in. There is great complexity and multi-layering involved in achieving success in both painting and garden design, and even though it still remains highly subjective, without a doubt balance plays the most important role in both.

TYPES OF BALANCE

We look for balance in all that we do and everything that surrounds us. We strive for a healthy work-life balance, for a well-balanced diet and for balance in our relationships. But what role does the balance play in our living environments and consequently the garden? The two most widely known types of balance are symmetrical and asymmetrical, however, these are so broad that they could only be described as overarching themes. Balance in the garden is achieved when the space is harmonious and it makes visitors feel at ease, yet has enough interest and provides them with choices. Balance is layers of voids and masses, light and shade, enclosure and exposure, colour, movement and character, as well as many other aspects.

> *IT IS NOT ONE COLOUR BUT THE COMBINATION OF COLOURS THAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL PAINTING*

SYMMETRY AND ASYMMETRY

Symmetry is most commonly found and recognised in formal gardens. Visibly defined geometric forms mirror each other in a precise order, creating a sense of stability and control. It often works best in large gardens with picturesque setting, showcasing human ability to shape nature and introduce order to it by structuring its untamed kind.

Asymmetry is less obvious to the observer and, if done well, almost invisible. It is therefore more difficult to define, as it aims to look more natural and undisturbed. The trees and paths winding throughout the garden might seem random at first, but if analysed, they have been carefully placed to create asymmetrical balance. It tricks you into feeling as if the garden is part of a wider landscape and has always been that way.

To best envisage how to achieve balance with symmetry and asymmetry, try to picture the simple act of weighing them on a set of scales. To achieve balance with symmetry, you should place identical elements in equal measures on both sides. With asymmetry, the opposite is true you should imagine a variety of different items balancing out two unique sides. ▷

ROOMS AND MASSES

It would be difficult to imagine a house without a number of rooms in it. Each one has a specific function, separated with walls and doors. Likewise, a garden could be viewed in the same manner.

‘Rooms’ in the garden are mostly hard landscaped areas, such as terraces and paths, but can also include any other areas that are left unoccupied to allow free movement through space, such as lawns or large water pools. They encourage exploration and provide choice so you can inhabit a space as you wish. Such voids also open up views and can be used to create vistas towards key garden elements. ‘Walls’, otherwise known as masses, are spaces permanently occupied with objects or design elements. They may consist of pleached trees, hedges, planting, sculptural features, furniture and trees or built forms. By placing elements within a garden we introduce balance between voids and masses as well as between shaded and open sky, and enclosed and exposed spaces.

PROPORTIONS AND EVOLUTION

The thought of sitting in the dappled shade of a large oak tree in an open park is a pleasant idea for most people. However, if we imagine that very same tree growing in a very small urban garden, our feelings would change. You can place the exact same element in a different setting and provoke feelings of empowerment or the complete opposite – feeling overwhelmed. To fully understand the balance of proportions requires careful consideration of how each one of the design elements relate not only to its setting or one another, but also human scale.

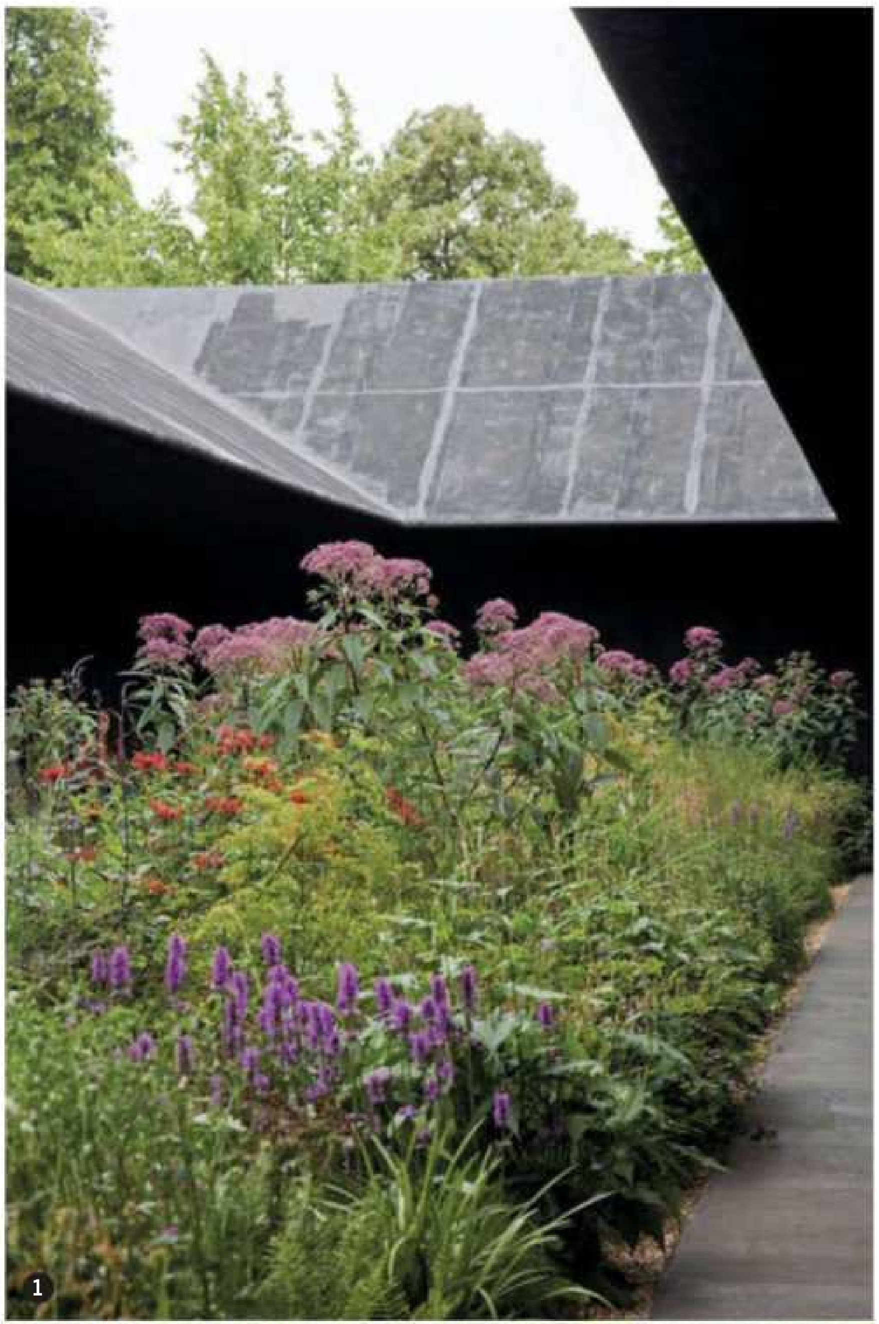
> *GARDENS ARE LIVING AND EVER CHANGING, SO THE BALANCE IS ALWAYS EVOLVING TOO*

Gardens are also living and ever changing, so the balance of the garden, is always evolving too. It might be through the simple act of plants growing taller than anticipated, or self-seeding, and outgrowing spaces. These events give us opportunities to better balance the garden.

If you structure the space with pleached trees, hedges or built forms you can create balance in large, open and empty areas. You can also develop layers of character and texture with reclaimed materials using contemporary build methods to create balance in modern gardens. Sheltered, shady rest spots will create balance in large and open sunny areas. Assess whether the size of garden paths relate to the scale of their surroundings. When plant beds feel too small, enlarge them, or replant plants where beds appear too flat. Introduce planting areas of varied heights to balance out large areas of empty lawn. Balance rich textures and colours of planting with plain, even garden backdrops or vice versa. Use colour in moderation so it doesn’t overpower the garden. You don’t always have to introduce colour in a form of planting you can also use furniture or hard landscaping.

Finding balance in the garden is a continuous process rather than a static result. It never fails to amaze me how quickly dynamics of a garden change. Instead of focusing on achieving a faultless looking space, try establishing dynamic relationships between different elements of the garden that result in an overall well-balanced composition. Even the complete opposite elements of the garden can come together to form an interdependent relationship once we discover that in every element there’s a seed of another, patiently waiting to be discovered, possibly through the simple act of a removing or introducing a single item, colour or plant. □

NEXT MONTH Getting inspiration from travel.



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1 ARCAID IMAGES / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 2 CLIVE NICHOLS / GAP PHOTOS, GARDEN – BRYAN'S GROUND; 3 MAAYKE DE RIDDER

❶RICH TEXTURE

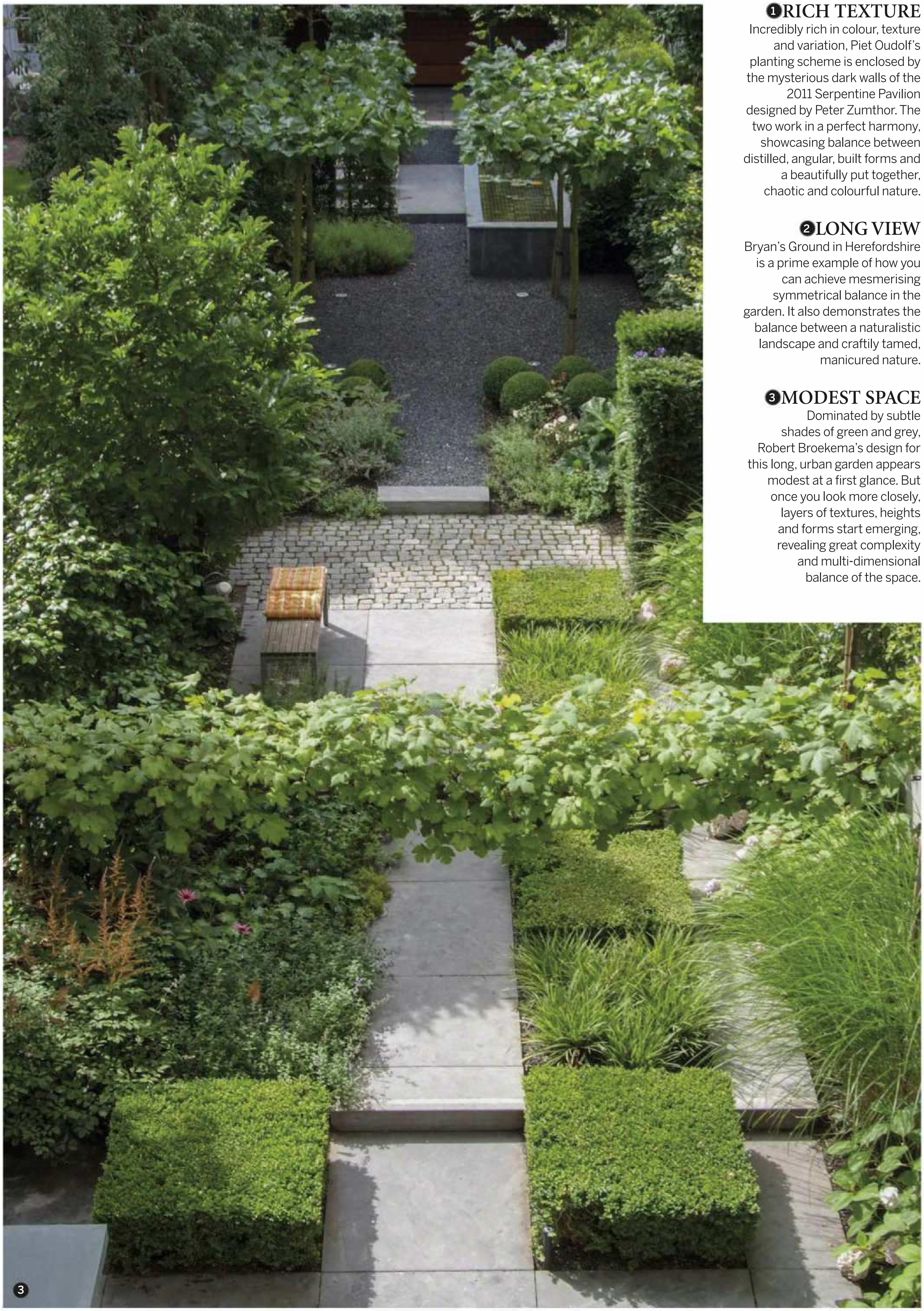
Incredibly rich in colour, texture and variation, Piet Oudolf's planting scheme is enclosed by the mysterious dark walls of the 2011 Serpentine Pavilion designed by Peter Zumthor. The two work in a perfect harmony, showcasing balance between distilled, angular, built forms and a beautifully put together, chaotic and colourful nature.

❷LONG VIEW

Bryan's Ground in Herefordshire is a prime example of how you can achieve mesmerising symmetrical balance in the garden. It also demonstrates the balance between a naturalistic landscape and craftily tamed, manicured nature.

❸MODEST SPACE

Dominated by subtle shades of green and grey, Robert Broekema's design for this long, urban garden appears modest at a first glance. But once you look more closely, layers of textures, heights and forms start emerging, revealing great complexity and multi-dimensional balance of the space.



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Flower power

Leeds Castle in Kent invites you to celebrate the glamour and thrill of the racecourse on 'Ladies Day' – created through flowers

Leeds Castle may boast 500 acres of sweeping parkland and formal gardens, but from 15 to 20 September 2018, it will become an eclectic, vibrant tribute to the women who make up its history. Having been owned by six medieval Queens of England and most recently Lady Baillie, Leeds Castle is often referred to as the 'ladies' castle' and this year, award-winning international floral designers will take inspiration from high fashion, high society and high-stakes horse racing to dress rooms in the castle in floral finery ready for ladies day.

When you buy a ticket to the Festival of Flowers, you can enjoy all the floral demonstrations, specialist talks and daily garden tours included in the price. Among the highlights is a guest talk on Saturday 15 September by English garden designer and television personality Joe Swift, taking place in the festival marquee. There will also be the opportunity to buy beautiful flowers, David Austen roses and garden accessories from a variety of stalls on the Pavilion Lawn.

Lady Baille's unconventional younger sister Dorothy Paget has been coined as 'The Eccentric Queen of the King of Sports' due to her love of horse racing. She most famously owned Golden Miller, a thoroughbred racehorse who is still the most successful Cheltenham horse ever and the only horse to win both of the United Kingdom's premier steeplechase races – the Gold Cup and the Grand National – in the same year (1934).

Lady Baillie herself was famed for her elaborate floral displays at society house parties in the 1930s, attended by stars such as David Niven, Errol Flynn, Prince Edward and Wallace Simpson. Lady Baillie's love of flowers is a tradition continued by the floristry team today, who provide floral creations to adorn the castle rooms.

Admission to the Castle Island, Culpeper and Lady Baillie Mediterranean gardens is included in the admission ticket. What's more, admission tickets are valid for 12 months so you can pay once and visit all year round. Leeds Castle is located near Maidstone in Kent, just off Junction 8 of the M20, within easy reach of London. Grounds open at 10am daily and the Castle is open from 10.30am.

WIN A FREE PAIR OF TICKETS

Be in with a chance of winning two adult tickets to the 2018 Festival of Flowers by answering a simple question.

To enter visit
leeds-castle.com/FlowersComp

- Deadline for entry is 10 September at 11.59pm, any entries after this time will not be selected as a winner.
- The winner (selected at random) will win two adult admission tickets to Leeds Castle, valid for multiple use for 12 months. UK only.
- The winner must be 18 and over.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE FESTIVAL AT **LEEDS-CASTLE.COM/FLOWERS**

DOWNTOOLS

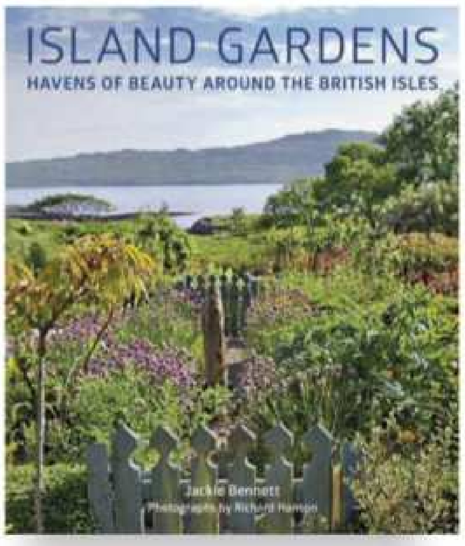
Book reviews, crossword, back issues, competition, reader offer

LATE
RASPBERRIES

ELENA HEATHERWICK

Discover intriguing jam recipes for fruits, including raspberries and figs, as well the more unusual persimmons and sea buckthorn, in *Five Seasons of Jam* by Lillie O'Brien, reviewed on page 103.

BOOK REVIEWS


ISLAND GARDENS
HAVENS OF BEAUTY AROUND THE BRITISH ISLES
Jackie Bennett
Photographs by Richard Hanson

ISLAND GARDENS
by Jackie Bennett
Photographs by
Richard Hanson

White Lion Publishing, £25
ISBN 978-0711239753

This jewel of a book combines really engaging well-researched content with the glossy beauty of a coffee-table publication.

Reviewer Hannah Gardner is a gardener and garden writer.

Jackie Bennett writes with authority and flair. Part travel inspiration for the outlying islands of the British Isles and part informative garden guide, this is a book enlivened by a generous dose of storytelling and nuggets of geographical and cultural history.

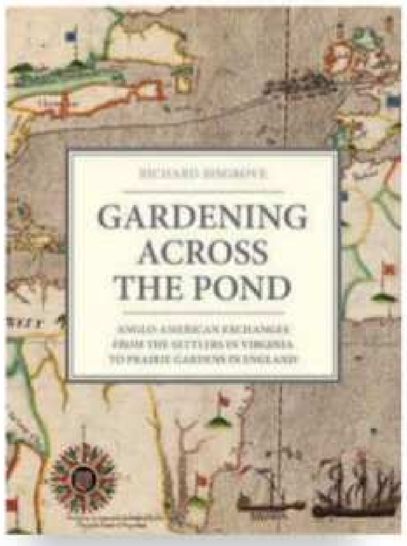
Bennett has selected and researched beautiful and interesting gardens from among the 100 inhabited islands of the British Isles. There is a pleasingly diverse range of both gardens and custodians. The gardens of community trusts, private individuals, hotels and The National Trust are included.

Larger islands, such as the Isle of Wight and Anglesey are given a chapter;, smaller islands such as Mull, Oronsay and Seil of the Inner Hebrides grouped together, with an exploration of gardens from each island.

The thread of the book is that island gardens often have more in common with each other than with their nearest mainland. Not necessarily seaside gardens, they have a variety of aspects and all are detailed. All enjoy proximity to water and a mild maritime climate that brings benefits and freedoms but also one main adversary, the wind.

The author explores gardeners' solutions to creating shelter and also celebrates the strong spirit of self-sufficiency that is crucial to the success of all these island projects. There is a relevant and detailed plant profile for each chapter. These include wildflowers and iconic introductions, such as agapanthus, which have now naturalised the Scilly Isles.

The atmospheric photographs by Richard Hanson are well captioned and complement the text. I recommend this eclectic book to anyone with an interest in horticulture and gardens generally.



GARDENING ACROSS THE POND
by Richard Bisgrove

Pimpernel Press, £40
ISBN 978-1910258248

Discover a US-UK special relationship that's still very much alive, in this history of 400 years of transatlantic horticultural co-operation.

Reviewer Annie Guilfoyle is a garden designer and writer.

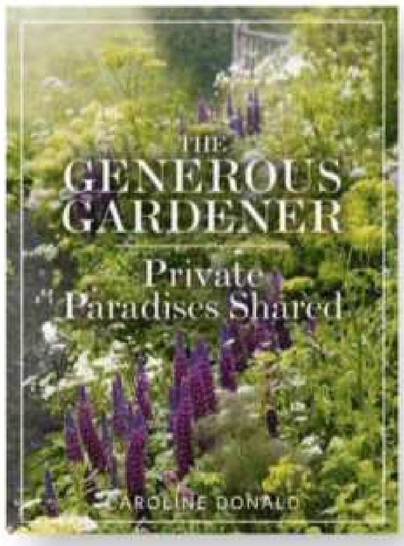
What better time and place to read this book than while flying across the Atlantic en route to teach at the extraordinary gardens of Chanticleer, Pennsylvania?

I was completely riveted from the very first page by the interwoven and complex horticultural history of the Anglo-American relationship.

Charting the fascinating course of horticultural history between these two countries, Bisgrove describes how plants, landscape and gardens were a 'powerful barometer of social evolution'. From the voyages of Francis Drake to the plant collections of David Douglas (mysteriously losing his life in Hawaii). Including the detailed collaborations between nurserymen, such as William Lobb, who collected giant redwood seeds from Oregon for the famous Veitch Nursery and Conrad Loddiges of Hackney who corresponded with Philadelphia botanist John Bartram. Bartram, described by Linnaeus as 'the greatest natural botanist in the world', was a good friend of Benjamin Franklin, and in 1765 was appointed by George III to be the 'Botaniser Royal in America, at a salary of £50 per year'.

The chapter on Women in the Garden, reveals one of the major differences between the USA and the UK in the early 20th century; this was the role of women in landscape design. In the UK it was a world still dominated by men but not so in the USA, where leading lights in the newly defined world of landscape architecture included Beatrix Farrand, Ellen Biddle Shipman and Rose Standish Nichols.

This is a fascinating read, whichever side of the Atlantic you happen to garden on, providing a thoroughly illuminating account of the garden ties that bind our nations together.



THE GENEROUS GARDENER

by Caroline Donald

Pimpernel Press, £30
ISBN 978-1910258972

More than 40 well-known people, from lords and ladies to actors and celebrity hairdressers, give access to their private gardens.

Reviewer Stephanie Mahon is the editor of Garden Design Journal.

This book is predominantly a compilation of Caroline Donald's *Sunday Times* past garden-visit articles, and unlike most garden hardbacks, there's more emphasis on the text than its illustration. The photographs – mere glimpses of the gardens – are taken by Donald or the owners, so don't expect spreads of beautiful sunlit borders at dawn.

Donald is more focused on the stories behind the gardens than displaying or describing each plot in detail. Her interviewees are famous, landed or lauded, but you get the impression Donald is unbowed by, almost uninterested in, their status – 'Although many of the people in this book are well-known,' she says in her introduction, 'in the end, they are just people… who love their gardens'.

Yes, there are people here with titles, and OBEs, but there are also painters, authors and musicians, garden designers, architects and racehorse trainers. And Kelly Brook. The author captures their essence quickly, in lively prose. Her observations about her subjects are not always polite ('her husband left for pastures new'), and she isn't beyond telling Jilly Cooper that her garden needs more colour.

Donald draws out wonderful quotes ("I like a bit of sitting," says Will Alsop), and entertains with tales, such as the owner who she asked if he ever worked in the garden with his staff – "I point," he replied.

Reprinting pieces that were written years ago reveals the everyday tragedy that properties do get sold, destroyed and neglected. This book also reminds us how tenuous a garden's existence is, how easily it can disappear; but this sense of just how ephemeral they are only makes them seem more special.

THE REMARKABLE CASE OF DR WARD AND OTHER AMAZING GARDENING INNOVATIONS

by Abigail Willis
Illustrations by Dave Hopkins

Laurence King, £12.99
ISBN 978-1786273161

An amusing and well-illustrated gift book for anyone interested in gadgetry and the progress of garden history.

Reviewer Tim Richardson is a garden critic and regular columnist.

The first thing to note about this fun and attractive little book is the unusual style and quality of the illustrations. The detailed pen and ink drawings by Dave Hopkins have been realised in a pleasing retro style that hearkens back not to the usual 1930s but to the high-Victorian period. The full-page drawing illustrating a topiary garden is magnificent, as is the one of the Temperate House at Kew, and there are many more. One suspects the artist is unfamiliar with the topic, because some of these drawings seem slightly odd, such as the one of a bewhiskered Victorian journalist sitting in the garden surrounded by his family, all of them apparently reading garden magazines. The trouble is, these are modern glossy magazines, with vibrant cover shots – nothing like 19th-century periodicals.

The text consists of 50 short and pithy entries devoted not just to garden inventions such as the Wardian case of the title, but plants, garden types – rockeries, 'wilderness gardens' – and even periods of garden history. Therefore anyone looking for a celebration of garden gadgets and inventions, which the title might imply, will be disappointed; I'm not sure that 'Roses', for example, counts as a garden innovation. But one shouldn't be too pedantic, perhaps, given the light-hearted tone. The entries in fact amount to an (extremely) potted history of English gardening, right up to what is called 'prairie gardening' and an entry on climate change – presumably a less desirable 'innovation'.

This is an undemanding read, and the kind of book that tends to end up in the smallest room in the house. The unusually small print size may create problems for older eyes.

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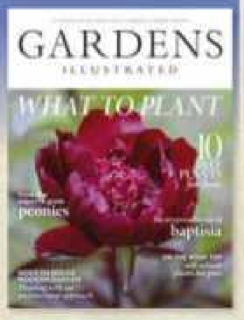
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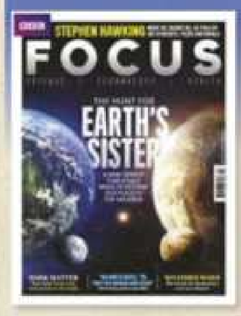
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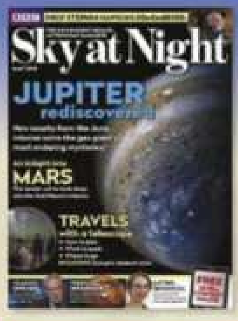
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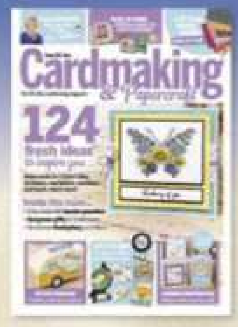
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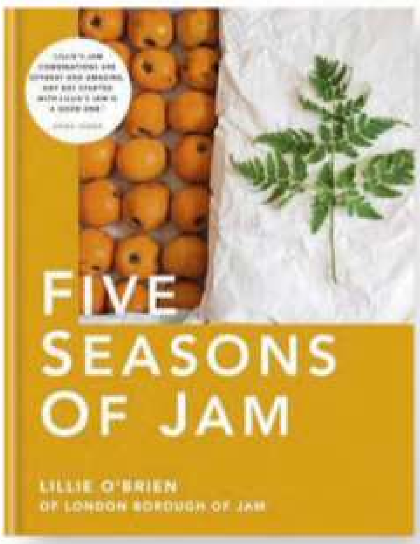


FIVE SEASONS OF JAM
by Lillie O'Brien
Photographs by
Elena Heatherwick

Kyle Books, £20
ISBN 978-0857834393

An exciting selection of experimental recipes that celebrate a wide array of fruits and preserve the flavours of the seasons.

Reviewer Alys Hurn is staff writer for Gardens Illustrated.

Chef Lillie O'Brien's career has been built on using all parts of the plant or animal. Preserving is an important element of that ethos and her love of making and bottling flavours has led her to open the London Borough of Jam shop in Hackney, and write her first book *Five Seasons of Jam*, a collection of seasonal recipes for jam, jelly, wine and vinegar.

As the title suggests, there are five seasons to the jam maker's year; mid to late spring, summer, early autumn, late autumn, and winter to early spring. O'Brien begins each section with a delightful anecdote about tracking down the fruit for her jam, and the people she meets.

All the recipes make small-batches, so that the end product is fruit-driven rather than sugar-driven, and although the ingredients list is often short, it's adventurous.

O'Brien uses an impressive number of fruit varieties, especially plums: 'Marjorie's Seedling' and mirabelle are used as much as greengage and 'Victoria'. I love how she includes often discarded parts of fruit and veg, such as the leaves of blackcurrant bushes and tomato plants. O'Brien also uses fruit kernels and nuts, as well as a host of herbs and spices and out of the ordinary ingredients, such as Earl Grey tea, cocoa nibs, watermelon rind and Tokay wine.

The challenge lies in the practicality of finding this amazing array of ingredients. Many of recipes rely heavily on the reader having space for an orchard and time to grow their own, or a well-stocked farm shop or nearby farmers' market. A list of recommended regional suppliers wouldn't go amiss, so that keen cooks can get their hands on covetable produce. But, if you've been waiting for a reason to buy a fruit cage, this is it.

Other books

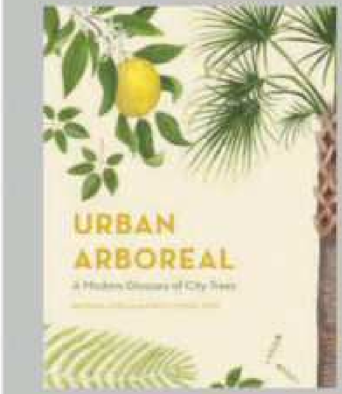
Five new titles taking a closer look at inspiring art and design, as well as plants, both desirable and otherwise.

Natur. Ästhetik. Design.
Nature. Aesthetics. Design.

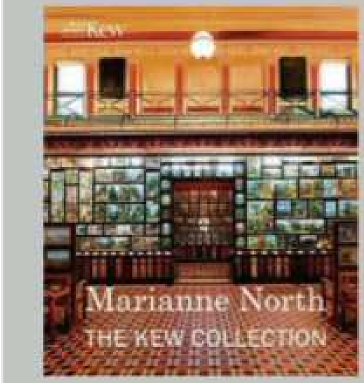
NATURE. AESTHETICS. DESIGN.
by Peter Berg
DVA, £45
ISBN 978-3421041074
A collection of gardens designed by garden architect Peter Berg, with a foreword by James Alexander-Sinclair.

CHARLESTON
A BLOOMSBURY HOUSE AND GARDEN

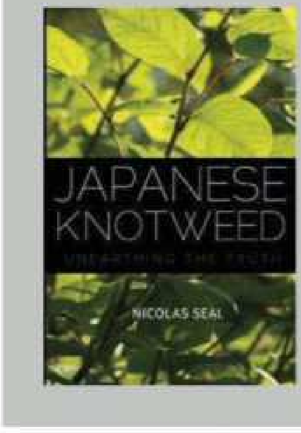
CHARLESTON: A BLOOMSBURY HOUSE AND GARDEN
by Quentin Bell and
Virginia Nicholson
White Lion Publishing, £18.99
ISBN 978-0711239319
Charleston explored by Vanessa Bell's son and granddaughter.



URBAN ARBOREAL: A MODERN GLOSSARY OF CITY TREES
by Michael Jordan and
Kelly Louise Judd
White Lion Publishing, £18
ISBN 978-1781317419
An illustrated history of trees found in cities around the world.



THE MARIANNE NORTH COLLECTION
Royal Botanic Gardens,
Kew, £40
ISBN 978-1842466650
A stunning coffee table book full of botanical paintings by Victorian traveller and artist, Marianne North.



JAPANESE KNOTWEED: UNEARTHING THE TRUTH
by Nicholas Seal
Carrowmore, £14.99
ISBN 978-1999991517
A detailed guide to Japanese knotweed from identification and anatomy to recommended removal solutions.

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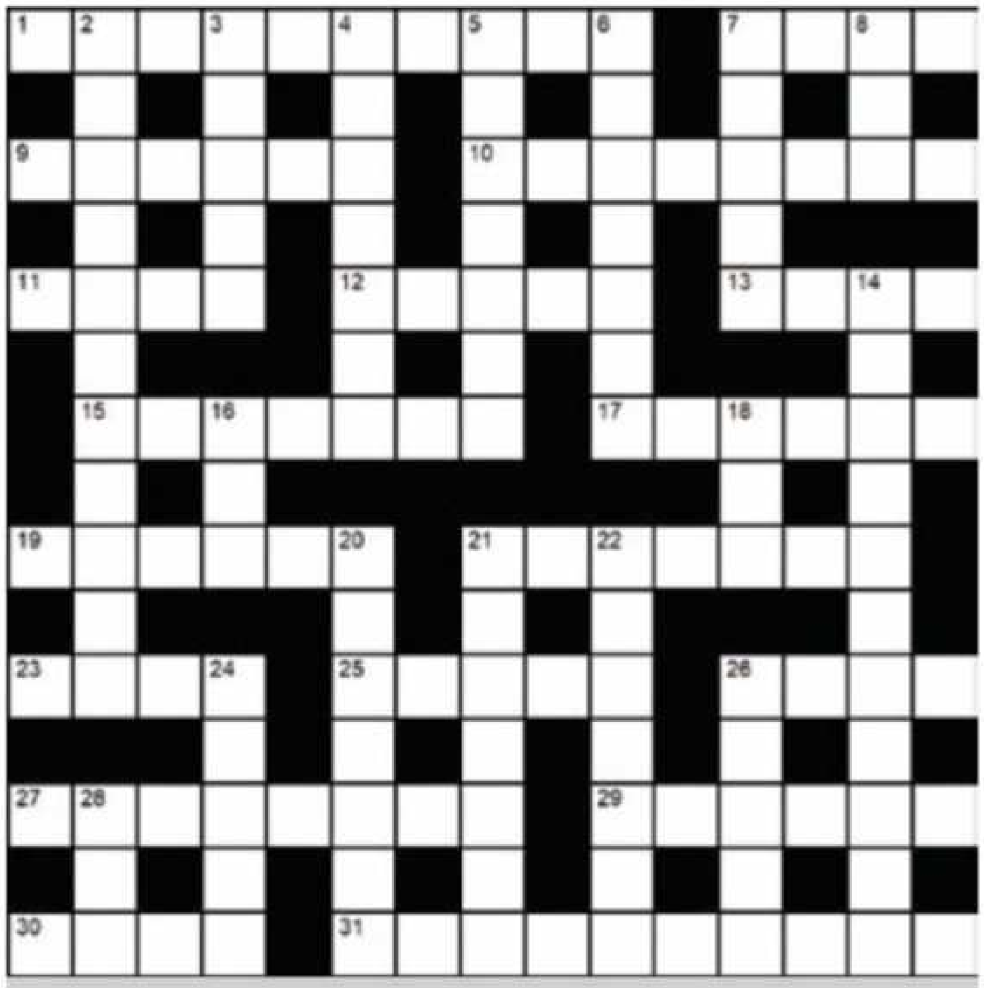

ACROSS

1 Plant of *Erysimum* genus – a lone one on the border at social events? (10)
7 Seed containers of eg honesty flower (4)
9 Pollen-receiving part of flower – disgraceful sign? (6)
10 Ripe and readily available (2,6)
11 Dwarf, yellow-flowering rhododendron's great London architect? (4)
12 Sharp projections on eg a leaf margin (5)
13 Luxuriant… part of *Aesculus hippocastanum* (4)
15 Sheila modified a genus of the 'Snowdrop' tree, aka Silverbell (7)
17 Evergreen flowering shrub with brilliant spring foliage (6)
19 A pachysandra with white/brown flowers – no alga, perhaps (6)
21 Consensus: it's a cold-hardy, blue-black grape variety (7)
23 An Austen heroine's pink-flowered diascia (4)
25 Sweet pea with pink/white flowers – a heavenly sight? (5)
26 Zest of an orange, say (4)
27 Bright scarlet tulip – if rule is changed (8)
29 A species of lacecap hydrangea… some wasp eradicated (6)
30 Tiny, flowerless plant not welcome in lawn (4)
31 Common name of *Liatris spicata* – 'Merry plume'? (10)

DOWN

2 The snapdragon genus (11)
3 Name of Scotland's most exotic botanic garden – move along! (5)
4 Eg greenhouses needing wall support (4-3)
5 Deciduous shrub with bell-shaped flowers eg 'Bristol Ruby' (7)
6 Fruit of a thorny shrub – pink and trendy (7)
7 A gem of a white-flowering streptocarpus? (5)
8 A series of double-flowering petunias – partly deciduous (3)
14 Plant of *Euonymus* genus – badly splintered by end of axe (7,4)
16 A late-cropping raspberry with firm fruits– a heavenly sign! (3)
18 An April-flowering, frilly pink cherry – found in Caledonia! (3)
20 The habit of *Ceanothus* 'Cascade' … creates chagrin (7)
21 Unusual cyme for hairy-leaved herb used as fertiliser (7)
22 Hazel's fruit container? (3,4)
24 Fir genus – disease from mad dogs, not right! (5)
26 A pale-yellow narcissus, begins with hard fruit seed (5)
28 An *Helenium* series – 'Flying Saucer'? (3)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

SOLUTIONS TO AUGUST'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS: 1/11 Chat Noir **4/29** Belladonna Lily **9** Clones **10** Cutworm **12** Minor **13** Lips **14** Salvias **16** Aralia **17** Bessie **19** Rutaceae **21** Itea **22** Tudor **24** Elms **26** Bluebell **27** Savory **28** Agapanthus.
DOWN: 2 Hallo **3** Tendril **4** Besom **5** Lychnis **6** Aster **7** Onoclea **8** Nemophila **14** Sweet flag **15** Ice **16** Art **18** Stake up **19** Rudolph **20** Chervil **22** Tie in **23** Roses **25** Morel.

READER COMPETITION

Win a trip to Orticolario, one of Italy's premier gardening events, held in the grounds of Villa Erba set on the shores of Lake Como, 5-7 October 2018

Held over three days, Orticolario gathers together top nurseries, companies selling garden products and food specialists, all with an eye to fashion, taste, art, design and the very best in horticulture.

The theme for this year's tenth event is 'Playing in the garden' with irony, surprise and amazement, illusion and vision, discovery, fun and experimentation all considerations when creating a garden to give pleasure.

Held in early autumn, visitors can admire show gardens drawn from an international selection of designers and chat to nurserymen to get advice about the best plants for late season interest. This year, the guest of honour is well-known British gardener and plantsman Roy Lancaster, who will be presented with the Avant Gardening 2018 Award.

Find out more about the show and all its events at **orticolario.it**

OUR COMPETITION

Gardens Illustrated readers can enter our competition for the chance to win a weekend trip to Lake Como (for two people), including a visit to Orticolario garden show as VIP guests.

The prize (for two people)

- Flights out: London to Milan on 5 October 2018; return Milan to London on 7 October 2018.
- Transfers from and to Milan airport.
- Overnight stay in Cernobbio (double room), for two nights with breakfast and dinners included.
- Tickets to Orticolario garden show on Saturday 6 October with lunch in VIP area within Villa Erba.
- Choice of Como city tour, or boat trip or tour of Lake Como's villas, with lunch on Sunday 7 October.

HOW TO ENTER

Answer the following question:
Which of these famous lakeside gardens will you find on Lake Como?
a) Villa Carlotta
b) Isola Bella
c) Villa Taranto

Enter by post Send your answer on a postcard along with your name, address and contact details to *Gardens Illustrated* 264/Orticolario, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA.
Enter online gardensillustrated.com/competitions
Closing date 3 September 2018.
Terms and conditions apply (see below). Please note prize does not include transport to and from airport in the UK. Dates are not transferable. Times of flights subject to availability. Extra expenses incurred are not included.

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***Agapanthus* 'Navy Blue' syn. 'Midnight Star'**

***Coreopsis* 'Mango Punch'**

Erigeron karvinskianus

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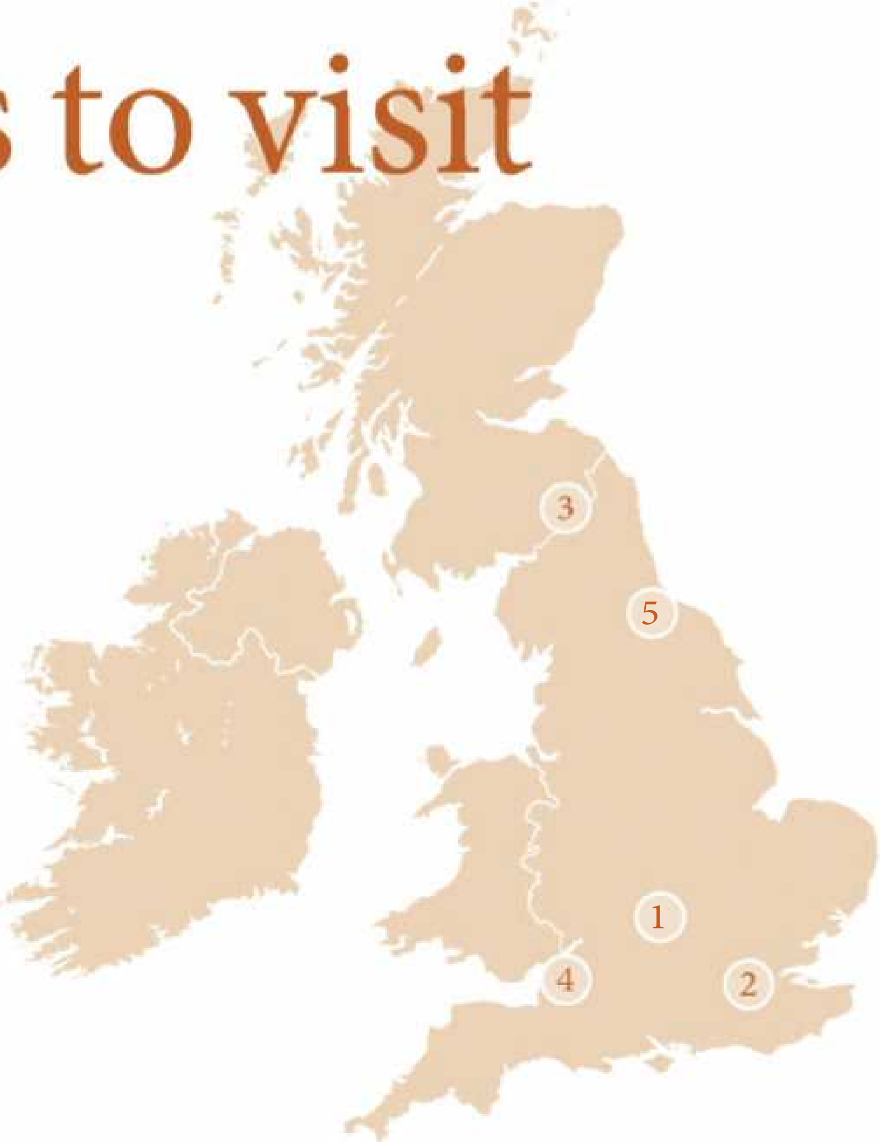
Peek behind the walls of five stunning gardens



1 WATERPERRY GARDENS

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Near Wheatley, OX33 1LA | 01844 339226 | waterperrygardens.co.uk

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Isleworth, London TW7 4RB | 020 8232 5050 | nationaltrust.org.uk/osterley

3 ABBOTSFORD

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Wraxall, Bristol BS48 1NX | 01275 461900 | nationaltrust.org.uk/tyntesfield

5 HELMSLEY WALLED GARDEN

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Nr Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2AB | 01580 710700 | Sissinghurst@nationaltrust.org.uk

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Wells, Somerset BA5 2PD | bishopspalace.org.uk | 01749 988111

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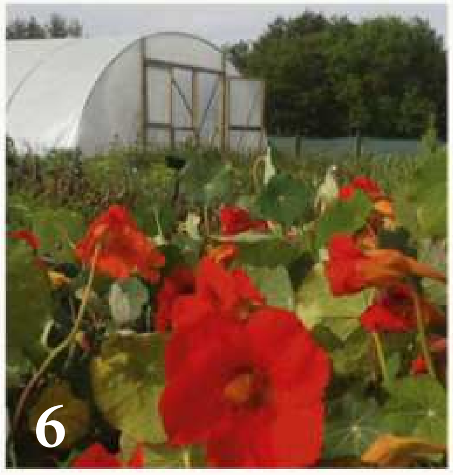
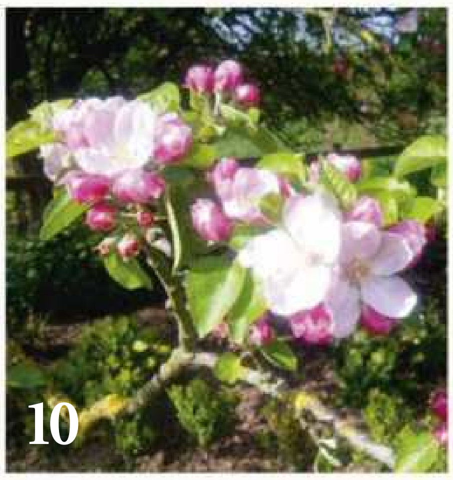
Lamport, Northamptonshire, NN6 9HD | 01604 686272| lamporthall.co.uk

Nursery Collection



ORNAMENTAL TREE
NURSERIES
7



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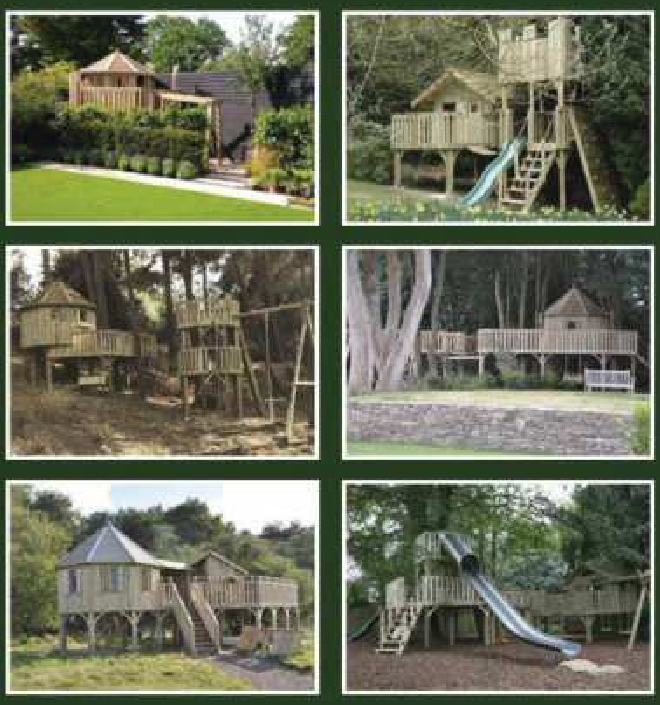

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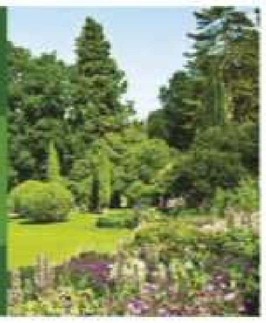

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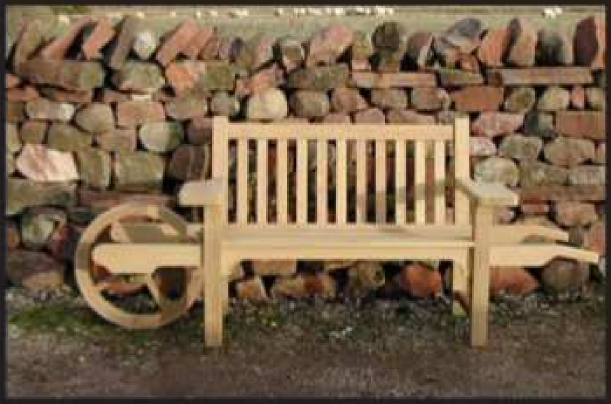

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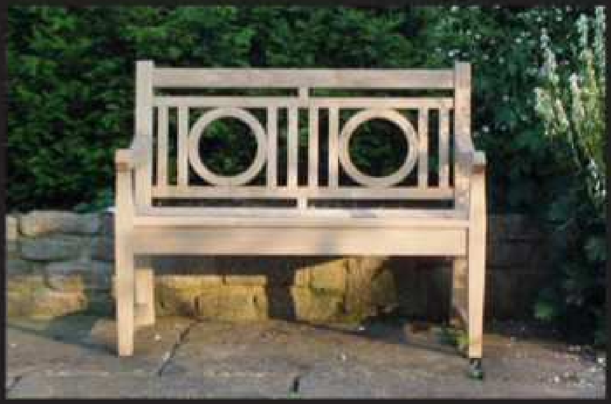

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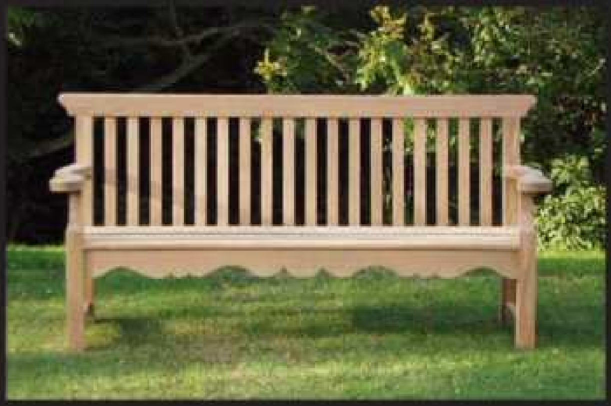

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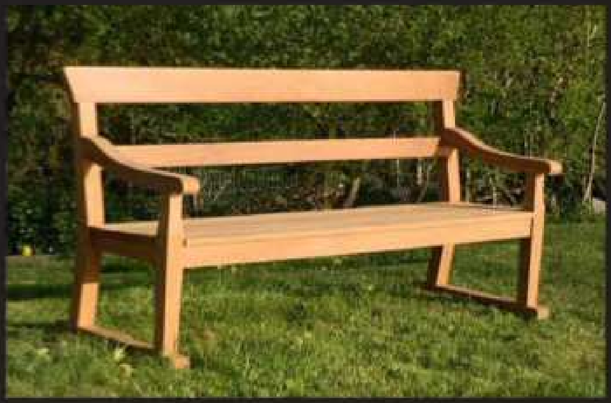

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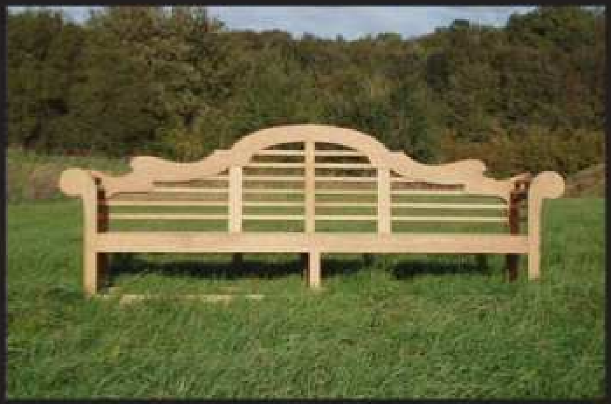

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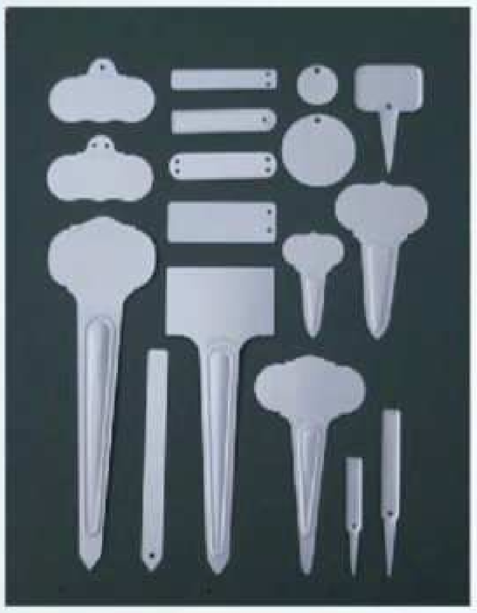

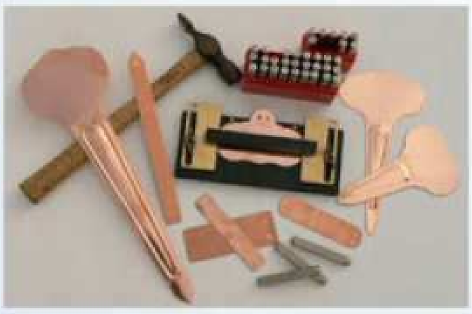

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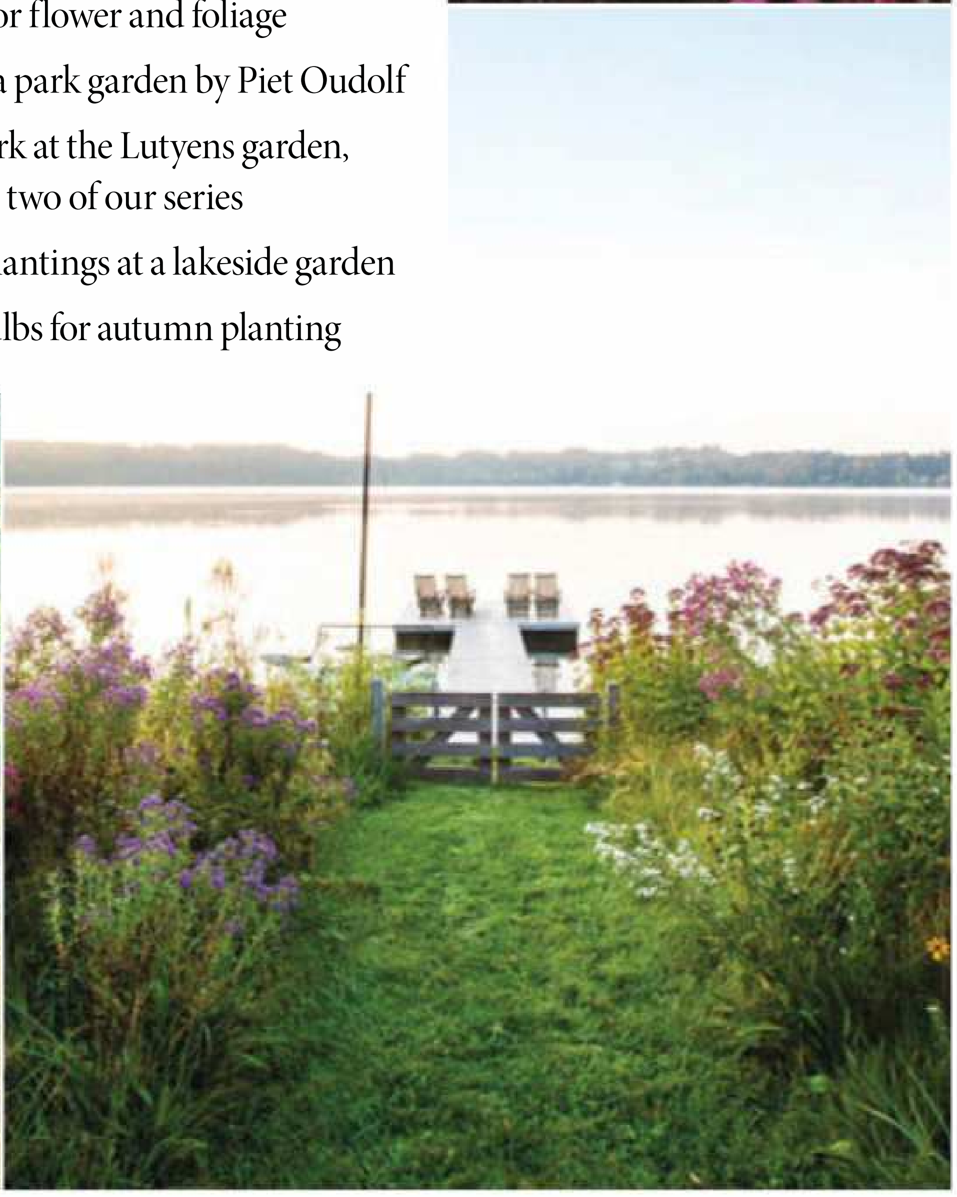
GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

OCTOBER ISSUE

- The best cotinus for flower and foliage
- Late-season perennials in a park garden by Piet Oudolf
- Dan Pearson's new work at the Lutyens garden, Folly Farm, part two of our series
- Carefully crafted native plantings at a lakeside garden
- Designers favourite bulbs for autumn planting



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WRITER'S PLOT

THE PRODIGAL RETURNS

Egged on by his friend Kate, Frank is on an autumn shopping spree to overhaul his garden's borders, but before he completely empties his wallet it could be time to exercise some self-restraint and learn from past mistakes

WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **RACHEL VICTORIA HILLIS**

THERE IS A CREEPING TIDE OF BLACK POTS FLOWING ACROSS THE FLAGS. IT LOOKS FINE NOW, BUT WILL BE HIDEOUS COME WINTER

Buying plants is too easy. With half a garden to refill there have been some serious raids on nurseries this summer, often in the company of my friend Kate, the one who has moved in down the road and has an entire new garden to fill. She is also a thoroughly bad influence, as am I on her no doubt, when it comes to acquiring plant booty, egging each other on to buy the things we are only half convinced of ourselves. But the dopamines of shopping will not necessarily lead to the deeper satisfactions of horticulture. I know people who garden by attrition, shoving the same plants, over and over, in the same places encouraged by the one per cent that sometimes succeeds. I have never hoped to be one of them.

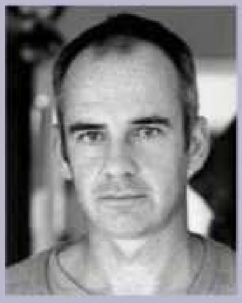
At the same time it has been a little sobering while overhauling this garden to find all the labels, sometimes legible, usually not, of easily acquired things set loose to take their chances in the borders. So many tiny plastic tombstones could be depressing, or they could be instructive. Sometimes it was a case of planting in the wrong place, more often the fault was in setting out a plant to sink or swim in an environment it wasn't ready for. The places we buy from are called nurseries, not universities, and yet we expect the alumni to enter the world of work straight from a four inch pot.

So now I have evolved, I hope. No more wandering the garden with a miniscule new treasure in hand, looking for an ephemeral opening to squeeze it into, thinking that I was being virtuous by planting it straight away. A couple of years ago I made a stockbed with that principle in mind, but now, between the flood of new acquisitions and the deluge of refugees coming from the revamping of the border, and that border being not yet ready for the current occupants of the stockbed, something more had to be done. The terrace has become a school for plants.

New things are immediately potted on and up and divided if and when possible, and potted on again. There is a creeping tide of black pots flowing across the flags. It looks fine now, with most of the plastic covered by foliage, but will be hideous come winter, which is a good incentive to graduate most of it into the ground by then, but with caution.

The first job will be to empty the stockbed into the border and refill it from the pots. It's tricky to know what should be given priority. Last winter two delectable Japanese anemones perished in plastic pots. I know it was a long and eventful winter, but who knew that Japanese anemones were the least bit sensitive to cold? The only safe option will be to get everything into the ground, somehow.

It has, happily, been a good summer for growing, and almost everything is looking strong enough to enter the next stage of life. All the same I can't help worrying about the phloxes. Much as I love them, they do not love competition and so have a hard time in this garden, where it's all whelm or be overwhelmed. I've found some promising looking new ones, in particular Violet Flame, which is a bit like the previously adored and often lost 'Blue Paradise' but a lot more robust. Still, I don't want to put it out until there is an army of it, capable of defending its own territory. That might take a while.



Frank Ronan is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire.

And in the meantime, what should I do about the autumn haul? There are several plant shopping months left in the gardening year, and not much time for growing on (and I really don't want to be looking out the window at bare plastic pots all winter). Probably I should be disciplined and sit on my wallet until the spring, but having learned so much self-discipline already this year, is that asking the impossible? ◻

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